

GERRIT SMITH

ON THE

REBELLION.

STITCHES AND EDITIONS

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SPEECHES AND LETTERS

OF

GERRIT SMITH

(FROM JANUARY, 1863, TO JANUARY, 1864)

ON THE


REBELLION.



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LETTER TO GOVERNOR SEYMOUR.

PETERBORO, January 12th, 1863.

HON. HORATIO SEYMOUR :

DEAR SIR : I have read your Message. Although I belong to no party, I belong to a country. Although there are no party interests for me to promote and adjust myself to, I feel the preciousness of the interests of my country, and am deeply and abidingly concerned for their safety. Seldom more than when reading the Message have I felt the great peril of those interests. For I remember that the utterer of its dangerous doctrines is emphatically, if not indeed preëminently, the mouthpiece of a party comprising nearly half the voters of the Free States. I remember too what great weight with his party have the words of a gentleman of commanding talents, high culture, multiplied influential public relations, bland and winning manners, admired social and domestic life. How could I fail to fear that the Democratic Party, if not already fully identified with these dangerous doctrines, will by force of such commendations of them soon become so ?

1st. I find denunciation in the Message, but no denunciation of the rebels. The Cotton States and the New-England States do in your esteem share about equally in the guilt of the Rebellion. New-England, because she suffered her Garrison to write against Slavery, and her Phillips to talk against it, is in your eyes as criminal as the bloody men who flew at the throat of their unoffending country. New-England who, to help put them down, promptly armed hundreds of thousands of her cherished sons and promptly poured out scores of millions of her wealth, has no less of your censure and no more of your favor than have those bloody men. And yet you propose to put down the Rebellion ! But how can this be done if nearly half of us are like yourself ? How could we have the heart to do it even at little cost—much less at the required cost—if the rebels are no worse than the people of New-England ? And how, if we *had* the heart, would it be practicable, should you succeed, as is your too manifest intent, in arraying the Western and Central States against New-England instead of Rebeldom ?

2d. I see you still regret that the Satanic compromise proposed two years ago was not adopted. I call it Satanic because it was

to be a compromise between two guilty parties at the sole expense—and this too an overwhelming expense—of an innocent third party. Fresh outrages were to be heaped upon the negroes—ay and eternized. The malignity of this Democratic compromise, which not a few Republicans also favored, (for there are Republicans too who are capable of being satanized,) is equaled only by its meanness. That they, who could propose further and greater crimes against the guiltless and helpless, could still make much account of their Bibles and Churches, argues either their matchless delusion or their matchless brazenness. I do not say they would have made themselves better by burning up their Bibles and Churches: but I do say that they would have thereby made themselves infinitely more consistent.

3d. "The claim of power under martial law" you indignantly and utterly refuse to admit. You say that this claim "asserts that the President may in his discretion declare war." I do not believe that it does, and I never before heard that it does. You say that it "exalts the military power of the President above his Constitutional rights." I reply that this power is specifically one of those rights, inasmuch as the Constitution makes him the Head of the Army. I admit that he has no other official rights than what the Constitution gives him; and you should admit that it is only from martial law, or, in other words, the law of civilized warfare, that he can learn the measure of his rights as Head of the Army. You say that this "measure is fixed by the Constitution." Rather is it fixed by this martial law which you disparage. It also changes with this law, which changes with the progress of civilization. It is true that Congress has power to prescribe rules for war. But, on the other hand, it is not only true that it could not provide for a large share of the cases in which the Head of the Army might find himself; but also true that this power of Congress is to be exercised within the limits and according to the character of martial law. So long as that law shall forbid the poisoning of food or water, or the killing of prisoners, or the selling of them into slavery, Congress has no power to authorize these barbarisms. That a nation may carry on war according to its own laws, be they what they will, Christendom would never suffer. These laws must be conformed to the law of civilized warfare. If it is true, as recently reported, that the rebels shot twenty prisoners because they were black, and if also their government shall approve it, then will this enormous violation of the conventions of war not only go far to reveal the character of the rebels to the eyes of Europe; but it will also go far to damage their cause with her.

4th. Scouting as you do the doctrine of martial law, it is not strange that you deny the right of the Head of the Army to lay hands, even in time of war, on persons in a loyal State. Indeed, you do not admit that he may on persons in a revolted one. You decline saying whether such a State has lost any of its rights. Your language clearly implies that it has not lost them all. Here,

as elsewhere in the Message, you treat the rebels as more "sinned against than sinning." Doubtless you hold that State sovereignty can never die:—no, not even in a State whose people have all turned traitors. Possibly, however, you would admit that the Head of the Army has the right to dispose of the hundred Missouri traitors, who just within the north line of Arkansas are plotting and promoting the destruction of our army and country. But how farcical the distinction that he may not dispose of them if, availing themselves of your theory, they return a mile, and claim that they can now perpetrate their treason with impunity, because they are again in their loyal State of Missouri! Moreover, Missouri might, at the time, be the principal seat of the war, and the very State in which traitors could most peril and damage our cause. Whilst writing this letter, I learn that Springfield in Missouri is besieged by rebels. Does not our army there need the right to make the quick and sure military dispositions of both open and suspected traitors? Surely it does: and what folly, not to say what treason, to deny the right, simply because Springfield is in one of the really or nominally loyal States! Upon your theory a single State, and though no larger than Rhode Island or Delaware, might, under its mask of loyalty, by harboring traitors and protecting their operations, accomplish the betrayal of the country into the hands of the enemy. Surely, surely, our nation could not have meant to leave herself at such fatal disadvantage. She could not have failed to mean that, in time of war, her military power should be free everywhere within her borders to deal with traitors in its own sure and summary ways where they could not safely be intrusted to slow, uncertain, and what, even though in a professedly loyal State, might prove to be *disloyal* civil proceedings. If it be but one State that has broken out in war against the nation, the war power nevertheless is entitled to its paramount rule in every State so long as the war shall continue. So long it must have the right to practice in every State its own means for saving all the States. The military power may not dispose of a man in a loyal State! Amazing error! It may not only arrest him, but reduce his dwelling to ashes. The Head of the Army may, and should, order the arrest of the people of Chambersburgh, ay and the burning of their town, if he is convinced that it is, and if unburnt will remain, a nest of traitors. Had it been your purpose so to cripple the President and his army, as to render the country an easy prey to its enemy, you could not have written more effectually to this end than you have done. You say: "The unlimited, uncontrolled despotic power claimed under martial law is of itself a reason why it can not be admitted." The answer is, that for this very reason the power must be admitted. No nation ever did or ever can stand, that does not make martial law supreme in time of war. The main reason why the comparatively petty South is still able to resist the gigantic North, is that the one has and the other has not a Democratic Party to hold it back from an unrestricted and successful prosecution of the war. The

rebels "let slip *their* dogs of war." But the Democrats are constantly intent on leashing *ours*. You will argue the danger of the abuse of this martial law. But that will be no argument against the necessity of the law. It will be an argument only against the madness of running rashly into war.

5th. You deny the right of the Head of the Army to proclaim liberty to the slaves of loyalists. You seem to believe that our government must not only not *intend* injuries to loyalists, but must so conduct the war that not even *incidental* injuries, though afterward paid for, shall ever befall them. The military commander is however at as full liberty to burn the dwelling of the loyalist as of the rebel, if in his judgment the necessities of war call for it. It is his right to weaken the foe by calling away from him white or red or black men. He may strengthen his ranks by inviting to them the minor sons of loyal fathers and the apprentices of loyal masters. But if he may invite these to break away from their just and natural relations, how much more may he invite slaves, be it those of rebels or loyalists, to break away from their infinitely unjust and unnatural relations! He may not think the slaves to be in any wise fit for his ranks. He may (and this would be an entirely justifying reason) invite them to leave their rebellious or loyal masters simply because he would thereby reduce the force which produces the food and other elements of Southern subsistence and Southern success. In all this the commander would not be saying that the relation of master and slave is any less moral than the other relations referred to. He would but be saying that he feels bound to do whatever he can in accordance with the laws and usages of civilized warfare to weaken his foe and strengthen himself.

6th. Our work, as you interpret it, is to save the Constitution as it was and to "restore our Union as it was before the outbreak of the war." Right here, at this great error, is it probable that our nation will perish, if perish it must. The breaking out of the Rebellion found the nation so debauched by slavery as to be incapable of meeting the Rebellion on the one square and simple issue of putting it down. For thirty or forty years it had cherished, not to say worshiped, slavery: and nearly all its contests during that time for the Constitution and the Union were virtually contests for slavery. Hence she had scarcely come to blows with the South before the North found her people divided by feigned, false, impertinent and ruinous issues. Loud and incessant was the cry, that the Constitution and Union must be restored. The Democrats and pro-slavery Republicans meant a restoration to the intensely pro-slavery interpretation that the one and to the intensely pro-slavery character that the other had reached when the Rebellion broke out. The anti-slavery Republicans were for restoring the Constitution and Union to what they were held to be in those early days of the Republic, when slavery was looked upon as sectional and liberty national. A part of the abolitionists said that the Constitution is anti-slavery, and that therefore in the

name of the Constitution, as well as in the name of God, the Union should also be anti-slavery. And another part said that the Constitution is pro-slavery, and that they preferred no Union at all to a Union under a pro-slavery Constitution.

Oh! had we but been uncorrupted by slavery, how quickly would we have put down the Rebellion, if indeed there could in that case, have been a Rebellion to put down! We should then have wasted no time, and produced no division amongst ourselves, by talking about the Union, the Constitution, or even the Country. Our one purpose then would have been to put down the rebels—and to put them down irrespectively of the bearing it might have on whatever interests. Naked plunderers and murderers were these entirely unwronged rebels: and they should have been put down with as total a disregard of consequences, as would characterize the single purpose of a stern father in putting down his revolted child. Who doubts that with such a disregard they had been put down instantly? Suppose that scoundrels in Utica—your adopted and my native home—had, with arms in their hands, and using them too, seized her funds, her fire-engines, and her other corporate property, and that you had, at the time, been her Mayor; would you have sent to the Common Council a Message of the tone and character of that you have just sent to the Legislature? Would you have sought in it to divide her citizens upon a multiplicity of issues respecting the future condition of her Fire Department, her funds and other interests? Oh no! oh no!! You could have made no Democratic and no other gain by such an insane policy. You would, beyond a doubt, have sought to unite them in the one purpose and one endeavor to subdue and punish the miscreants; ay, to subdue and punish them, come what might of Fire Department, Funds, or even Utica herself. I am wrong—they would already have been thus united. Such union would have been the necessary result of the outrage. Only bad counsels and partisan influences could have disunited them. The people of the North were united when they heard of the bombarding of Sumter. But alas our good and patriotic President temporized! The spirit, which should have been taken at the flood, was allowed time to subside. Hundreds of thousands of lives, and directly and indirectly thousands of millions of dollars have already been the penalty of this mistake: and only too reasonable is the fear that the loss of the nation will be needed to complete the penalty. How surely and how quickly would he at that time but for the timidity and hesitancy, which grew out of his pro-slavery education, have saved our wealth and toil from this oppressive taxation, our tens of thousands of bereaved families from their sorrows, and our country from the appalling prospect of her ruin! The Rebellion should have been shot dead at once. Whoever denies it proves therein that he is insensible of its infernal character, and knows not how to deal with such a crime. Or rather, whoever denies it makes room thereby for the suspicion that he sympathizes with the Rebellion and is a participant in the crime.

At once should the President have brought out the Big Emancipation Gun: and he should have so charged it, and so aimed it, as not to spare one shred of slavery in all the land. The Rebellion would have been ended by the first fire. And what right had the rebels to our shrinking and delay?—rebels who, without the least provocation, so malignantly and murderously struck at our all?—at the life of our country, and therefore at our all?

7th. What a sad exhibition of the power of ambition and party over a great intellect, combined with a gentle and refined spirit, is your insisting that slavery shall be reëstablished; that the Southern “elements of production *must* be unimpaired;” and, that nothing short of this “*can* command the support of the majority of the American people”! Yes, even now, when, if there ever was, there is no longer any Constitutional obstacle in the way of the slave’s freedom; even now when the slaveholder has himself opened the prison-door—you are still determined that he shall remain in bondage, and his children and children’s children after him—still determined that this shall continue to be a land in which multiplying millions have no right to husband nor wife nor children nor wages nor Bibles nor schools nor to aught else but stripes and insults, tortures of the body and tortures of the soul. You are indeed to be pitied. You were not made to be what you are. You were made to be a strong, and helpful, and sustaining brother among your poor, and needy, and weak brethren: not an object of terror but a tower of safety to them. You were made not to bolt but to unbolt the door of the oppressed: not to extinguish but to multiply and realize their hopes. But alas! your Party turned for strength and success to slavery; and so entirely identified itself with it that the Party can live only in the life of the monster, and must die when the monster dies. Hence it is that you are what you are. You are stone-blind, both morally and politically. You see not God’s hand in this war. You see not that His time has at last come for setting free his sable children. So deluded are you as to imagine that pro-slavery will be popular forever and abolition unpopular forever. But the Sun of the Seymours, and Rynders, and Woods will soon set in darkness; and the Sun of the Garrisons, and Phillips, and Cheevers will soon rise in splendor. Your spurious Democratic Party, deserted as it is by the Dickinsons and Butlers, and by all who love country more than party, and freedom more than slavery, will soon pass away, leaving History to tell on one of her blackest pages of as base and wicked a Party as ever defied God or trampled on man.

8th. In your infatuation you propose to cross swords with the President—and this too not figuratively but literally. You threaten the forcible supplanting of the military power of the United States by the merely civil power of this single State. This is your way of standing by the President in his patriotic endeavors. This is your way of standing by your country as she reels under the blows of traitors—of traitors in arms and of more effective traitors not in arms—of traitors in the rebellious States and of more

dangerous traitors in the loyal States. You say that the Union must be preserved. But your means for preserving it prove what kind of a Union it is that you are so intent on preserving. It is a Union for submission to the South. A Union for slavery and for the Democratic Party. You well know that our nation would have gone down very speedily had the civil power of Missouri, Kentucky and Maryland been allowed to override the military power of the nation. No man knows better than yourself to which side, but for the dread of that military power, the State, whose City shed Massachusetts blood would have gone, carrying with her both her civil and her military power. She might have gone South, even though opposed by a very large non-slaveholding majority.

To say that slavery is not the cause of the Rebellion is to say what is infinitely absurd. And yet for you to say it is any thing but strange. For you are a politician : and as all your political hopes are identified with slavery, you love it, cling to it, and are ever alert to screen it from blame. In consenting to let your idol be held responsible for this horrid Rebellion, you would consent to the only death you dread—your political death. Hence your queer theory that the Rebellion resulted from the characteristic differences between the people of New-England and the people of the Cotton States. I admit the existence of these differences. But who can not see that they have, in the main, proceeded from slavery? You imply that had there been as much homogeneousness between these peoples as is found “in the portions traversed by the great East and West lines of commerce,” there would have been no Rebellion. I agree with you. But I bid you remember that this is the homogeneousness of *anti-slavery* “portions”. For save that one of these “lines” is partly in the skirts of the slaveholding section of the country, they all traverse States consecrated to Freedom, and only such. I thank you for this illustration of the homogeneousness and peacefulness of the anti-slavery “portions” of the country—for this illustration of the falseness of your position that an anti-slavery portion shares in the responsibility of the Rebellion. You further imply that had there been between the people of New-England and the people of the Cotton States the homogeneousness there is between the Border Free States and the Border Slave States, the Rebellion would not have been. You enumerate the causes, namely, “confluent rivers,” etc. etc., to produce this homogeneousness ; but you do not give facts to prove that it has been produced. There are none to give. How can there be facts to prove the homogeneousness of two peoples, one of whom holds the family relation sacred, and the other separates its members upon the auction-block?—among one of whom the laborer is counted to be worthy of wages, and among the other of whips?—among the native adult population of one of whom not a third can read, whilst in such population of the other the individual who can not read is a curiosity seldom to be met with? Homogeneousness between the Border Free and

Border Slave States ! What imputation could be more insulting to the former, and what more false in the face of the fact that, whilst the Border Free States have furnished soldiers but to the loyal army and these cheerfully and abundantly, the Border Slave States, except little Delaware not so many, have furnished thousands—nay some, and probably each of them, tens of thousands—of soldiers to the rebel army ! There is not homogeneousness between Pennsylvania and Maryland ; nor between Ohio, Indiana and Illinois on the one hand and Kentucky on the other ; nor between Iowa and Missouri. I admit that the people of Missouri are coming to resemble the people of Iowa. But it is only because Missouri is casting off slavery, and hasting to make her grand State the grandest of perhaps all the States, and her City the Capital of the Nation, whilst Washington is left to be the University of the Nation. I admit that there is a class of men in the Border Free States, and indeed in all the Free States, who are exceedingly homogeneous with a class of men in the Border Slave States. I refer to the pro-slavery politicians in each section. Take for instance Governor Robinson of Kentucky and yourself. One might be tempted to conclude that the same pen wrote your recent Message and his—so equally imbued are they with the pro-slavery spirit ; so equally devoted are they to the Border State policy, which makes the saving of slavery paramount to the saving of the country ; and so equally determined are they that even in time of war “ the military is and must be subject to the civil authority,” and must be made and kept so “ at all hazards.”

I ought to have said in its more proper connection, that such a State as Ohio or Iowa will not thank you for implying that slavery is less repugnant to her moral sense than to New-England's ; and that Western hatred of oppression is less radical than Eastern.

To bolster up this theory you say, (for this is your meaning, and the only meaning that would be at all pertinent to the case,) that the Border Free and Border Slave States came out as one at the breaking out of the Rebellion. This is entirely true as regards the former :—but it is glaringly false as regards the latter. Virginia went with the rebels ; and for a long time there was a strong doubt (not even yet wholly dispelled) whether there was not in Maryland and also in Kentucky and Missouri a majority in favor of going with the rebels. You are constrained to except “ Eastern Virginia”—though you do it in a way so ingenious and artful, that the careless reader would make scarce any account of the exception. Nevertheless this “ Eastern Virginia” is several times as populous as the remainder of Virginia. And is it really so, that you did not see that this exception, which you make, is fatal to your attempt to prove that slavery is not the cause of the Rebellion ? If you did not, then is there here another fact of the stone-blindness which has come upon you. Why did Western Virginia cast in her lot with the North ? Because she has but half a dozen thousand slaves, and wants to get rid of them. And why did Eastern Virginia go with the South ? Because she has several

hundred thousand slaves, and wants to hold and multiply them. Can you doubt that Eastern Virginia, had her slave population been as sparse as that of Western Virginia, would have come North? Can you doubt that Western Virginia, had hers been as dense as that of Eastern Virginia, would have gone South?

That the Western and Central *Free States* "enlisted warmly in a war for the Union and Constitution" I admit. But your implication that New-England did not is baldly and cruelly false. That the Administration has abandoned its "sole purpose to restore the Union and maintain the Constitution" is a slander. I had no part in bringing it into power, but not the less ready am I to do it justice. And if, as you substantially say, "the Central and Western States" have in this gloomy hour, when to stand by the country is to stand by the Administration, given the cold shoulder to the Administration, then it is the slanderers and not the slandered who are responsible for so calamitous an alienation. I charged you with slandering the Administration. The sole difference between Democrats, Republicans and Abolitionists at this point where you slander it, is that whilst all three agree that the one issue is the salvation of the Constitution and the Union, the Democrats are not willing to have them saved at the necessary sacrifice of slavery; the Republicans are; and the Abolitionists rejoice in the necessity.

To return for a moment to your queer theory. What will not a man do when he is in straits? You would not consent to the disgrace and ruin of your pro-slavery party, as you would do if you consented to have slavery held responsible for the accursed Rebellion. Hence your queer theory, that has not one fact nor one semblance of a fact to sustain it. The theory which is made from facts is valuable. But the theory to which facts are made is worthless. Emphatically worthless is yours, since you have not so much as taken the pains to coin facts, and have substituted for the coinage simple assertion!

Slavery not the cause of the Rebellion! Then why is it that, whilst every Free State came out instantly in battle array against the Rebellion, eleven of the Slave States embarked in it, and three, if not indeed all four, of the others gave only too abundant signs that they also would embark in it but for their fear of Federal troops? Slavery not the cause of the Rebellion! Then why is it that the rebels say it is?—and why is it that they insult the Civilization of the age by making slavery the boasted corner-stone of their new nation?—and by making the first of all the objects of their diabolical movement the protecting, spreading, and eternizing of slavery?

I do not murmur at the Providence, which has brought you again into high political power. On the contrary, I submissively accept it as a part of the penalty of the American people for their oppressions of the poor. Your election, instead of the election of the brave and noble man who rejoices in the deliverance of the slave and who with his three sons is in the army of his country

instead of being in the counsels of its foes, is, notwithstanding it is so frightfully calamitous, to be endured as one of our merited inflictions. Every nation prepares its own cup. We have made ours very bitter. Nevertheless we must drink it. As a part of the punishment for our unsurpassed crimes against humanity we may have to witness the failure of all endeavors to save our beloved country, and may have to pass through the humiliation of recognizing the Southern Confederacy. But God be praised that over against all this deep and unutterable sorrow will be the deep and unutterable joy that the slave is free! In spite of the influence of your Party to the contrary and of your individual and amazing *determination* to the contrary, the slave will go free. Yes, though the guilty nation, with whose continued existence stands connected the highest object of your ambition, may be left to perish, the innocent slave nevertheless shall surely go free. Do you wonder at the positiveness with which I express myself at this point? I answer that this being, high above all human purposes and issues in it, a war of God against slavery, pro-slavery men are but fools in it, and only abolitionists competent to advise in it, and foresee its grand results.

Faithful were the abolitionists, all through a quarter of a century, to warn their countrymen of this day of blood. But pro-slavery politicians requited them with scorn. And so frenzied are such politicians now, as to purpose to save the country by crushing the abolitionists. This, however, is but as every impenitently wicked people have dealt with their faithful prophets.

The counsels of the abolitionists — of the men who have made slavery their life-long study — can alone, under God, save our appallingly imperiled nation. Every step taken by her in accordance with these counsels is a step in the way of her salvation; and her every step to the contrary is in the way to her destruction.

Your former and your present friend,

GERRIT SMITH.

STAND BY THE GOVERNMENT.

SPEECH IN ALBANY, FEBRUARY 27, 1863.

AFTER offering the following Resolution :

“Whereas, the one work of the nation is to crush the Rebellion; and whereas it can be accomplished through the Government only: Therefore resolved, that Democrats, Republicans, and Abolitionists—men of all parties and men of no parties—should stand by the Government, and sympathize with it under its embarrassments, and bear its burdens, and be grateful for its fidelity, and, whilst quick to commend its wise measures, should never criticise its mistakes but in the spirit of patriotism instead of party, and but to make the Government stronger instead of weaker, and the enemy weaker instead of stronger.”

MR. SMITH proceeded to say :

I am not rightly represented in all respects. For instance, because I am an old and zealous Temperance man, it is assumed that I am for having Government take the Cause of Temperance under its wing. Whereas the theory, which I have spent so much time during the last twenty years in elucidating and commending, is that Government has nothing to do with Churches nor even with Schools, with religious institutions nor even with moral reforms; and that its only legitimate province is the narrow one of protecting the persons and property of its subjects. Hence when I would have Government shut up a dram-shop, it is not because I would have it enact a sumptuary law or care in the least for the cause of Temperance; but it is solely because a portion of the men, who frequent that dram-shop, are wont to get crazed in it, and to go forth from it to perpetrate crimes against person and property. It is because that manufactory of madmen sends out one man to fire a dwelling, and another to murder a wife, and others to other deeds of mischief or horror. Then again because I am an old and radical Abolitionist, it is taken for granted that I would have our struggle to put down the Rebellion perverted

into a crusade against Slavery. Whereas ever since the Rebellion broke out, I have been entreating my countrymen not to fall away to any side issues, but to consecrate themselves "arm and soul" to the one work of putting down the Rebellion. Unceasingly have I summoned them to stand shoulder to shoulder in this work, notwithstanding their differences as Democrats, Republicans, and Abolitionists. To this end was my printed Letter in 1861 to Edwin Croswell. To this end have been many of my writings and speeches. With this struggle to put down the Rebellion I have from first to last been unconditionally identified. The President's blocking up of Fremont's and Hunter's Abolition way did not in the least diminish my devotion to the one absorbing purpose of putting down the Rebellion; and his Proclamation of Freedom could not increase it. Whether the Government in its changeful measures, was now for slavery or now against it, I kept steadily on in my zeal and labor for the overthrow of the Rebellion.

Excuse the egotism of these introductory remarks. I dislike egotism, whether it be in myself or in others. But I felt that I must make them in order to get your unprejudiced and open ears. I felt that you would not respect what I have to say to you, unless I should first disabuse you of your false impressions regarding my attitude toward the Rebellion.

The way is now open for me to mention some of our duties at this crisis.

1st. *The Rebellion must be put down.*

2d. *All hands must help put it down.*

The Republicans, Democrats, and Abolitionists must all help, be it at whatever risk to their respective parties. Indeed, so far as the Rebellion is concerned, they must all give up their parties, and become one party. Outside of this one party they may still maintain old party names and old party aims. But into this new and sacred party they must bring no party interests, no party jealousies, no party divisions. In this party all must be harmony; and its members must know each other only as Americans.

I add that whilst on the one hand the Abolitionists must help put down the Rebellion not merely because it is a Pro-Slavery one —(for, Slavery out of the question, they should be equally prompt to put it down)—on the other hand the Anti-Abolitionists must not withhold their help because it is a Pro-Slavery Rebellion. The Democrats must be as prompt to assist in putting down this Rebellion as they would be were it an Anti-Slavery one. They know that they would lose very little time in arraying (and that too most vindictively) all their might against a New-England Anti-Slavery Rebellion. They, who are now Peace Democrats, would then be War Democrats; and such of them, as are now the most tender to rebels, would then be the least patient with rebels.

I said that the Abolitionists must help put down the Rebellion. If any of them would not have it put down unless Slavery be put

down with it or before it, they are wrong. The Rebellion is, aside from all questions of Slavery, an enormous evil; and, as such, all are bound to help suppress it, unconditionally and uncalculatingly. Moreover, in the light of a sound philosophy there is no right thing that *can* be damaged by ending an evil; and hence if the undertaking to abolish slavery be a right thing nothing is to be feared for it from the suppression of the Rebellion.

I called the existing Rebellion a Pro-Slavery one. I do not forget that there are persons who find it convenient to deny it that character. The Southern statesmen, one of whom calls Slavery the corner-stone of their new nation, do not thank these persons for this denial. The Southern clergymen will not thank them for it. They entirely concur with the Southern statesmen at this point. Their Bishops, in their recent Pastoral Letter, are not ashamed to avow that the Rebel States "are about to plant their national life" on Slavery.

3d. *The Northern people should all admit—nay, to use a more positive and proper word—they should all DECLARE, that the Rebellion is entirely groundless and exceedingly wicked.*

None among us should any longer say that the Abolitionists provoked the Rebellion. The saying of this goes if not to justify, nevertheless to excuse, the Rebellion; and it goes to reduce the hatred and horror of it, and also the strength of the purpose and endeavors to subdue it. I readily admit, that the Abolitionists did by their much talking and writing against Slavery greatly annoy the slaveholders. But surely this talking and writing, whether right or wrong, furnished no excuse for Rebellion. Free discussion is to be tolerated. If it is not, then the Missionaries, which our Churches have sent all over the heathen world to discuss idolatries and other forms of error, should be recalled; and then, indeed, the progress of mental and moral improvement, the earth over, should be arrested. Republicans and Abolitionists! will not you tolerate free discussion? I need not ask the Democrats whether they will. For, in the turn of things, they have become the champions of free speech. They, before whose frequent mobs against free speech I had twenty or thirty years ago to retreat and hide, have now become the loudest-mouthed defenders of free speech.

But you will perhaps say that the Abolitionists went beyond free discussion, and pushed up some of the Northern Legislatures to unconstitutional legislation against Slavery. But even if it was unconstitutional, it certainly gave no just occasion for Rebellion. If nothing else forbade Rebellion, it was forbidden by the fact that there was the Supreme Court of the United States to pass upon the constitutionality of the legislation and to make a decision that all would abide by. Right here, let me run a contrast between the North and the South for the purpose of taking all possible cavil and complaint at this point out of the mouth of the South. The whole South wrote or talked for Slavery. But it was only a small portion of the North which wrote or talked

against it. Most of the Northern people either apologized for it, or absolutely defended it. Again, Southern men came North, and advocated Slavery in the broadest and most offensive terms. Nevertheless these Southern visitors were treated courteously and kindly. But when Northern men went South, they were, if however slightly suspected of being Abolitionists, insulted, frequently tarred and feathered, and not unfrequently murdered. And again whilst the North was entirely willing to have the question of the constitutionality of her Anti-Slavery legislation go to the Supreme Court, the South angrily and stubbornly refused to let her Pro-Slavery legislation undergo this trial. Such was the refusal of Charleston and New-Orleans, when Massachusetts sent Commissioners to those cities; and the Commissioners had instantly to turn homeward in order to avoid violence and death. And now, to continue the contrast, whilst the North, though under the provocation of these deep wrongs, did not rebel, nor even remonstrate, nor scarcely murmur; the South, though suffering no wrong nor semblance of wrong, has rebelled, and armed herself against the nation. Nevertheless so debauched and blinded by Slavery had the North become, that, even in the face of this contrast, there are thousands amongst us who say and scores of thousands who believe, that the North and not the South is the aggressor—that the North is the guilty injurer, and the South the injured and the innocent!

"O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason!"

4th. The Rebellion must be put down unconditionally.

Government must make no conditions, and accept none. Stern, uncompromising, unrelenting must be its policy until the Rebellion is suppressed. After that, the freer the play of a merciful and fraternal spirit the more will my heart rejoice. Nor must any Republicans propose a Swiss mediator or any other mediator. Nor must any Democrats recommend the disposing of the Rebellion by a Convention or popular Assembly to be held in Nashville, Louisville, or anywhere else. It is for Government, and Government only, to dispose of it. The people must not override their own Government. That is the most effectual way to disparage and destroy it. Our Government could never more be good for any thing after the people had taken the Rebellion out of its hands. Henceforth it would be a derision both at home and abroad;—as contemptible, and probably as transient also, as a Mexican Government. Were a mob raging in your streets, would you leave it to the city of Troy to say what should be done with it? Certainly not. Nor would you, instead of encouraging and strengthening your city government to disperse it, virtually get up another mob. This, however, you would do, should you, contemptuously thrusting aside your city government, summon the people to deal with the mob. Yes, in that case your people would be mobbing their own Government most

emphatically. Now, this Rebellion is but a mob—a mob on an extended scale ; and it is as exclusively the work of the Federal Government to put it down, as it is of a city government to put down a street mob ; or of a father to put down the child who revolts against his authority.

I need not add that our Government will not tolerate Intervention, but will regard it as War ;—and, this too, whether the Intervention be on the part of one nation or many nations ; under the plea of commerce or humanity.

5th. The Rebellion must be put down, let the consequences be what they may to the Constitution, the Union, or even to the country.

I have not said this to startle you, but to reconcile you to it. The nation must be reconciled to it, or perish. Suppose the revolting child I referred to should say : Father ! you had better not try to put me down. It might be the breaking up and ruin of the family.” How prompt and proper would be the father’s indignant answer : “Family or no family, you young rascal, you shall be put down.” And down he’d put him, wholly irrespective of the bearing of the transaction upon the family. Nay, he would, as he ought to, entirely forget his family in his one absorbing purpose of subduing the rebel. Nevertheless in this forgetting of his family, he would best serve and most honor it.

Now, I hold that in just the spirit of this wronged and aroused father should the American people and American Government feel and act. Thus, more than any other wise, would America set an example full of glory to herself and of benefit to mankind. But if from her lack of an immovable resolution to exhaust herself, if need be, in conquering the diabolical Rebellion, it shall finally remain unconquered ; then will America bring greater disgrace to herself and greater detriment to mankind than any other nation ever did. The lustre, which innumerable victories have shed upon the arms and name of England is infinitely less than would be that of her expending her last strength in crushing an utterly unprovoked and wicked revolt of a part of her counties. And that high-spirited nation would expend it rather than give up her Government and her boundaries. Shame to you, English rulers, that you are not willing to have this nation also maintain Government and boundaries at whatever expense or hazard ! All honor to you English people, that you are coming out so bravely and so nobly against your rulers and for us at this point, which is so vital not only to us but to all mankind ! And you do this too in the face of the arguments, that the giving up of our resistance to the Rebellion would give bread to your hungry ones. God bless these hungry ones for their patience and their sympathy with us, and for affording another shining instance that men of integrity “do not live by bread alone.” The English masses, who have to confront aristocracy, can well sympathize with our brave armies, who have gone forth to battle with an aristocracy not less but more overbearing, and but little if any less mighty.

I add that the present is no time to talk, and get up issues and

multiply divisions, about the Constitution, the Union and the country. One person may wish to have the Constitution altered, and another may not. For one I do not, and never did, wish any alteration in it. No Democratic stickler for *the Constitution as it is*, be he living or dead, has ever spoken or written as much as I have for *the Constitution as it is*. Two years ago the Democratic Party and no small portion of the Republican Party were ready for Pro-Slavery changes of the Constitution. I opposed them; but I did not ask for Anti-Slavery changes. I was entirely content with the Constitution just as the Fathers gave it to us. Again whilst one person may wish the Union modified, another, like myself, may be satisfied with its present terms. And again, whilst one person may wish to have the country no larger, another may go as far as I did in Congress, and wish to have it include Cuba and all Mexico. Oh! no, the present is no time to agitate, or even to mention those questions. There is time now for nothing else than for all of us to band ourselves together, and to determine in the depths of our soul, that the Rebellion shall go down, even though Constitution and Union and country go down with it. But some of you will tell me, that you wish to save the Constitution, the Union and the country. So do I wish to save them. There is, however, only one way to save them; and that way is to forget them—to forget them in the one engrossing purpose to crush the Rebellion.

Now does all this, which I have just been saying, seem extravagant? Nevertheless it is only in the spirit of all this that the Rebellion can be overcome. It is this out-of-season talk for the Constitution and the Union all the way through the war, that has so confused the nation, and prevented the concentration of its interest and energies at the point which claims all its interest and energies; and that has done more than any and all things else to demoralize, debase, and destroy the nation. If the Democrats, Republicans, and Abolitionists would come into a mutual stipulation not to speak for ninety days of the Constitution, the Union or Slavery, there would within that time grow up such an earnestness and unanimity in the work of annihilating the Rebellion, that it would be annihilated.

"*The Constitution as it is and the Union as it was*"—this, all the way through the War, has been the great motto, not of the Democrats only but of most of the Republicans also. I do not say that it was a bad motto with which to face the discontents, murmurs, and threats that preceded the War. I do not say that it was unwise in Mr. Lincoln and our statesmen generally to continue to recognize it, in those early stages of the war, which nearly all of us hoped would not result in actual and proper war. But neither consistency nor any other consideration required them to recognize it any longer. Its effect any longer could be but to deceive and destroy. And yet, even now, when the strife has taken on the dimensions of the widest war and the character of the most horrid war, this motto is still current. Alas! what misconceptions of the hour have they who, in this life-and-death-

struggle, would inspire us with any paramount anxiety, or indeed with any anxiety, for the Constitution and the Union! And, alas! how unfitted for a part in this struggle are all they who yield themselves up to this untimely and comparatively low inspiration! I say not that it will be improper to revive this motto after the rebels are conquered. But I do say that until then it should be buried and forgotten. For until then we have nothing to think of but the Rebellion, and nothing to do but to put it down.

A mobocratic spirit against the present charter and present boundaries of a city is beginning to show itself. The loyal citizens do well to meet this spirit with a motto, and to cry: "*The charter and the boundaries!*" But would not such a motto be madness after the mobocrats had already applied the torch and were already at work to reduce the city to ashes? It would be—and as emphatic madness is this prating about the Constitution and the Union in this fearful hour, when the mightiest Rebellion the world ever saw has raised the question—not what will become of a Paper and of politics, but what will become of our wives and children. "*Death to the mobocrats!*" could be the only suitable motto in the one case, as "*Death to the rebels!*" is the only suitable one in the other.

Oh! no, this is not, as it is still claimed to be by the designing and the deluded, "*a War to maintain the Constitution and restore the Union.*" In its beginning it may have been proper to call that the issue. But it is no longer so, now that the Rebellion has reached its present proportions, and is so full of peril to the very life of the nation.

In this connection I would rebuke the frequent question—whether we mean to subjugate the Southern States. Until the Rebellion is subdued we mean to do nothing but subdue it. After that will be soon enough to decide what to do after that. To decide it now would be but to embarrass us, and to get up another issue on which to divide us. For the present we are to see to it, that the South do not subjugate us.

6th. *This clamor for carrying on the War in only a Constitutional way should cease—for it springs neither from good sense nor from an enlightened and enlarged patriotism, and it is fraught with peril if not indeed with ruin to our cause.*

It is not true that we are bound to carry on the war Constitutionally at all hazards. I know that the rebels who have kicked aside the Constitution say that we are. This was the burden of Breckinridge's speeches in the Senate just before he left it to join the rebel army. But to say that we are to receive the advice of the rebels with caution, is not to treat them discourteously or ungratefully. Their professed regard for the Constitution and for our welfare through an incessantly scrupulous and minute observance of it is certainly not above reasonable suspicion.

I admit that I see no necessity for violating the Constitution in carrying on the War. But if I did I would not hesitate to have it violated. I totally deny that this nation or any other nation is

to regard itself as tied up to a Paper in the prosecution of war. Never before was there a nation so insane as to maintain for one moment the idea that, in a life-and-death-struggle, it was bound at whatever risk to take those steps and those only which had been marked out for it in a time of peace and safety. What the salvation of the nation calls for is to be done, whether the Constitution does or does not provide for it. The person who says otherwise, would be like to evince more concern to save the hat than the head of the drowning man. "All that a man hath will he give for his life"—and all that a nation hath, Constitution included, should she be willing to give for her life. The country is more than the Constitution. Not for the sake of the Constitution may the country be hazarded—but for the sake of the country the Constitution may be sacrificed. And I repeat that the putting down of the rebels is more than both Constitution and country.

There is, my hearers, a better inheritance than a Constitution or even than a country, which we can leave to our successors. This better inheritance is the glorious and immortal fact, that we made more account of putting down an internal Rebellion than we did of preserving our treasure or our life, our Constitution or our country. To resist high-handed and bloody crime at whatever hazard or expense to ourselves, and to be less concerned to escape from death than from deep and enduring disgrace—surely this will be more precious in the esteem of our children than any thing we could have saved for them by failing of this fidelity and bravery, and going down to the low grounds of calculation and compromise. To be willing to fling away our all in withstanding the assaults of a demonized gang on the sacred edifice of free government—this is to make ourselves the greatest blessing to those who shall come after us; and this is to do more toward carrying upward and onward the human family than could be done by saving a thousand countries in which this sublime spirit of self-sacrifice is not found.

I said that I see no necessity for violating the Constitution in carrying on war. The paper withholds no needed power. It provides that Congress may declare war and enact all laws "necessary and proper" to give effect to the declaration. Congress is, of course, the sole judge as to what laws are "necessary and proper." Surely here is power enough.

We must all stand by the Government, and do all we can to make strong its heart and hands. Ours is an intelligent Government, and it is honestly intent in putting down the Rebellion. Every government falls into mistakes. Doubtless ours has fallen into some. But the Democrats complain too unqualifiedly and sweepingly of it. I admit that they are entirely right in denouncing the unnecessary seizure and imprisonment of citizens. Nevertheless there *are* instances of their necessary seizure and imprisonment; and moreover there are instances (I confess comparatively few) where there is not opportunity for the examination of the accused either previous to or immediately after his

arrest. But, Democrats, if you will bear in mind that this power to seize and imprison citizens is, although a very necessary one, a very odious one, you will see that Government is under a strong motive to exercise it sparingly, and only for the safety of the country. I am not a member of the Republican Party. Nevertheless I can trust our Republican Government at this point. I would, Democrats, that you also might be willing to trust it. Enlighten it, and remonstrate with it, as there may be occasion. But do not array yourselves against it. For the dear country's sake, be on its side—its friend and not its foe.

Let me speak of an error, which not Democrats only but Republicans also are liable to fall into. Now a Fremont, now a Hunter, now a Fitz-John Porter, and now a McClellan comes under the censure of the Government. Perhaps in every instance the censure is unjust. But, Democrats and Republicans, if there be an instance in which you are entirely sure it is unjust, nevertheless do not add to the embarrassments of the Government and the perils of the country by making it an occasion for complimenting and glorifying the censured one. In this wise you will gather a party around him, and it will not fail to be a party against the Government. But the Government, so long as it has the armed South for a party against it, can not afford to encounter any other party. I do not know but the Government fell into mistakes in regard to all these Generals. But I do know that whether it did or did not, the present is not the time to punish the mistakes of the Government. As much as we can now do is to punish the crimes of the rebels. Let the friends of the Fremonts and McClellans be patient. Justice will be done to their favorites; and the less hurriedly the more perfectly.

I pass to the wrong which those Abolitionists commit, who condemn the President for not proclaiming freedom to all the slaves, and also to the wrong which those Democrats commit, who condemn him for proclaiming it to any. Now the truth on the one hand is, that the President has no right to abolish Slavery except as Commander-in-Chief, and no right even in that capacity to abolish it any further or faster than the military necessities of the country call for. The truth on the other hand is, that he has the right to abolish any and all Slavery the abolition of which is called for by such necessities. In his much criticised, much condemned, and much ridiculed Letter to Horace Greeley the President laid down the true doctrine in this case. If it would help us in the War to call to our side the slaves of South-Carolina, then the President should call them. If it would not help us to call those of North-Carolina, those he should not call. In nothing of all this has he ought to do with the morality of Slavery. I grant that if the slaves will not come, it is useless to call them; and I am aware that it is very frequently and confidently asserted that their love of their masters and mistresses is too great to permit them to come. If, however, they will come, then by all means they should be called—and this too even if they should, as it is said they

would, prove too lazy to work where there are no whips to work under; and even if they should, as it is said they would, prove too cowardly to fight. For left where they are their toil sustains the Rebellion.

I claim not to know whether the slaves will come to our stand—nor whether, if they should come, they will either work or fight. But I do claim that, inasmuch as there is a chance, be it however small, that they will come, and a chance, be it however small, that they will work, and a chance, be it however small, that they will fight, the President's Proclamation of Freedom is justified. For what, if it shall turn out that the slaves *are* able to tear themselves away from their dear masters and mistresses! What an immense advantage to our cause will that be; and even though they shall prove unable or unwilling to render us any service after coming to us! And then if it shall turn out that they are willing to work on our side, and to work as faithfully as did that comparative handful of escaped and deserted slaves who, instead of being, as was all along alleged, a charge upon our national treasury, put into it, over and above wages and expenses, between five and six hundred thousand dollars—then will this immense advantage be doubled. And then a still greater advantage to our cause if they shall be willing to fight for it, and our officers and soldiers shall be so earnestly patriotic as to let them fight for it. For I know not why, if they shall be willing to fight for us, they shall not fight with as signal bravery and effectiveness as did the negroes in both of our wars with Great Britain. Whether our officers and soldiers will be so much in earnest to put down the Rebellion as to let the despised negroes help them put it down, remains to be seen. If *entirely* in earnest, they would welcome the aid not only of negroes and Indians, but of even the devil himself.

I repeat that I know not whether the slaves will come to us, or whether if they do they will work or fight. They are called the most patient and forgiving of all the races. They will certainly prove that they are, if they can forget that monstrous and meanest crime of letting the thousands, who toiled on the Vicksburgh cut-off, fall again into the hands of the vindictive slaveholders; and if they can also forget the innumerable instances in which slaves coming to our lines, some with very valuable news of the designs and movements of the enemy, and all with hearts and hands to help us, have with satanic malignity been returned to the fate from which they had fled; and if, in a word, they can forget our persistent ridicule, loathing and murderous hate of a people, who have done not one wrong in return for the mountains of wrong under which we have buried them. It is true that even such a people may at last be goaded to revengeful and bloody insurrections. Not, however, if they can have a way of escape from their oppressors. The President's Proclamation is the safety-valve. One of my chief reasons for welcoming it was that it would probably prevent servile insurrections.

I said that the Proclamation is to be justified in the light of even the least favorable expectations from it. But should we realize from it all this, which I have been speaking of as possible, then should we all rejoice in it. Should we hear to-night that a Southern black regiment has overcome a rebel white one, would we not all swing our hats? Would not even the Democrats? It would indeed put to shame some of their oftenest repeated and most confident predictions, and it would take from their harp its most available string. But, Democrats, you would be too patriotic and magnanimous to mind that—wouldn't you?

I spoke of the blacks coming to our side. Let me not be misunderstood. The abolition of Slavery will not send the Southern blacks to the North, but it will send the Northern blacks to the South. A genial climate, and, still more, masses of their race will attract them thither. They who seek to make the white laborer of the North jealous of abolition, do so either very ignorantly or very disingenuously.

And there is still another complaint which I have to make. It is the injustice and insult to the President of which they are guilty, who charge him with turning the war into an abolition war. He solemnly declares that his sole end is to put down the Rebellion; and that whatever he does with Slavery is done but incidentally, and but to that sole end. What, if the President, having taken it into his head that one of the most effective things which could be done toward prostrating the Rebellion is to free the cotton from the tenacious grasp of the Confederate Government, should be multiplying endeavors to that end? Would it be fair to charge him with perverting the war into a war to free the cotton? I deliberately affirm that it would be quite as fair as to charge him with perverting it into a war to free the slave. Let us all be just to the President. To be unjust to him is not only to wrong him, but to wrong and perhaps ruin the country. Democrats! there are some who accuse you of opposing the President's Proclamation, because you would pervert the war into a war for Slavery. Are you not indignant at the accusation? Surely, you should be. For nothing in all the history of man could be more revolting than such a perversion of a just war, and such a betrayal of a righteous cause. Great is the wickedness of a slaveholding people who make war for Slavery. But the wanton and unmitigated wickedness of a non-slaveholding people, who should join them, is infinitely greater.

I must bring my speech to a close. Do you wonder that I, so old and so radical an Abolitionist, have expressed in it no concern about Slavery? I could not express what I did not feel. Since the bombarding of Sumter I have felt no concern about Slavery—for I could not doubt that it was the effectual bombarding of Slavery. As the war has advanced I have been increasingly confident that the people would never consent to reestablish the cause of all this blood and horror and desolation. As I have seen the plowshare of war pass through Slavery, I have felt more and

more that the time for the abomination to pass away had come. And now have we signs that the very earthquakes of war will soon be rending this mountain of oppression, and tossing its parts hither and thither beyond all possibility of restoration.

Moreover, civilization is everywhere casting off Slavery; and there is reason to hope that even the South will become so far civilized by this war as no longer to desire Slavery. It is indeed sad to have to number war amongst the civilizing agents. Nevertheless so it is, that whilst the nations are on their present low plane—a plane in the case of some of them not above the barbarism of slaveholding—it is hardly extravagant to say of them that, “without shedding of blood there is no” civilization. War is emphatically the worst of all remedies. But the nations are still too low and barbarous to try only the better ones.

Yes, the slave is soon to go free. Heaven’s time for setting him free is at hand; and earth and hell can not prevail against heaven. He goes free by the shedding of blood. But it is the blood of his common oppressors North and South, instead of his own. Wondrous manifestations of the Divine hand! Wondrous retributions of the Divine justice!

But though I am sure that the innocent slave shall go free, I am not sure that the guilty nation shall live. God alone knows what penalty will be adequate to its enormous, continued, and unrepented of crimes against his poor. Perhaps it is to be destroyed, and to be a warning, loud and long, against oppression. Nevertheless, though we are to be submissive to whatever may be in store for her, we are to labor zealously, wisely, and incessantly for her salvation.

My hearers, we will all stand by the Government—will we not? Although some of us are Democrats and some Republicans and some Abolitionists, we will nevertheless lock hands as Americans—will we not? We will all of us, notwithstanding our party divisions and party interests, generously and patriotically band ourselves together to crush this causeless and accursed Rebellion—will we not? Would that we might this night feel more deeply than ever that it is not by the rebels that we can be conquered, but only by ourselves. Nothing is truer than that the life of the Rebellion is in disunion at the North. Nothing is truer than that it would find its death in union at the North.

Ere taking my seat, let me remind you of our duty to stand by our Army—by the brave men who have gone out from among us to suffer every hardship and to face every peril in the high and holy work of suppressing the most nefarious of all conspiracies. But the way to stand by them is to stand by the Government they serve. To desert the Government is to desert them. Our soldiers bid us stand by the Government. They are afflicted that so many of us do not. They are indignant at the divisions by which we encourage the foe, and make him abler to drive back and slaughter our friends. Such heartlessness toward themselves as well as toward the country is very unlike that reward of sympathy, grati-

tude, and love on which they counted when they went forth to fight her battles. Our slain soldiers, could they speak, would bid us stand by the Government. Our tens of thousands of broken families weeping over those who went to the army never more to return from it, bid us stand by the Government. The enlightened friends of freedom and righteousness the earth over bid us stand by the Government. And, loud above all, comes down the voice out of heaven : "Stand by the Government! Stand by the Government!"

DENYING SUFFRAGE EVEN TO SOLDIERS!

TELL the drunkard or the debauchee that he is a ruined man, and he will stare upon you with astonishment and frown upon you with indignation. So is it with this nation. She is annoyed and angry at the charge of being ruined. Nevertheless she has been ruined for more than forty years. From the sad hour when Slavery triumphed over Freedom in the Missouri Compromise, down to the present no sadder hour she has never ceased to be a ruined nation.

Our nation saw a fierce and mighty Rebellion spring up within her borders and ripen into the organization of an independent government. She saw here and there her little peace army, or rather armed police, betrayed into its hands; and here and there the rebels plundering her treasuries. She saw them so bold as to fire at her ships, and seize her forts, and build up fortifications over against her own. Nevertheless (thing unheard of in the history of nations!) she did not move. Why did she not? Simply because she could not. Why could she not? Simply because she was ruined.

It is true that the news of the taking of Sumter proved that the nation was not entirely dead. This electric shock detected some lingering remains of patriotism. But that President Lincoln, though loyal and loving the right, was nevertheless incompetent to avail himself of the occasion and to strike effectively for her salvation, was among the painful proofs that the nation was still ruined. In common with the nation, he was drugged and debauched by Slavery. How then could he suddenly rise up in earnest resistance to the Rebellion it had prompted? Oh! could he have then believed that the military necessities of the country would justify his summoning to his standard every slave in the land, how soon would the Rebellion have been put down! Or even had he gone no farther than to summon to it, at that nick of time, the slaves of the revolted States. Are we told that the people were not yet prepared for so strong a measure? They were: and never since so well. Moreover, the measure itself would have completed the preparation—would have supplied any possible lack in it. Nothing is so mighty to convert men to the right as bravery for the right. The fearless and unhesitating leader is the one they love to follow. Had the tide in our nation's affairs been taken at the Sumter flood it would have led her "on to fortune." But our

leader lacked the courage and decision to take it. Through his timidity and indecision it was left to subside, with but little profit having come of it. And alas, how has her voyage since been "bound in shallows and in miseries!" The enthusiasm kindled by the outrageous and infamous assault on Sumter was suffered to pass away. Very soon the people sank down into a willingness to hear demagogues and traitors prate about the Constitution. In none but a ruined nation can the people, at the very time when the life of their nation is struck at, give ear to such prating.

Does this late-in-the-day call upon the blacks to enroll themselves in our army prove that our nation is not ruined? Far from it—especially so, since the Government has not the manliness to promise to see to it that captured blacks shall, instead of being murdered or sold into Slavery as the rebels threaten, be treated as prisoners of war.

I referred to this prating about the Constitution. It continues unabated to this day. Anxiety lest we may lose, not the Country, but the Constitution, is no less irrational and is infinitely more ruinous than would be anxiety to save, not the man from drowning, but his hat from going down stream.

I, who have never spoken or written one word against the Constitution, and who have spoken and written more words for it than did ever any Pro-Slavery man living or dead, can afford to say that this prating for it has made "Constitution" the most offensive of all the sounds that strike upon my ear. "Slavery" itself is to me a less disturbing word than this one under cover of which Slavery is hypocritically served.

I spoke of the continuance of this prating. In reply to every proposition for a more vigorous prosecution of the war, we are still met with the cry: "The Constitution! The Constitution!" And even now, when we would help on the war by allowing the soldiers of the State of New-York to vote at her elections, we are met by this same cry. Surely, surely, we have here another proof that our nation is ruined.

How commanding are the reasons for allowing them to vote! No other class of men have so emphatic a right to vote for the rulers of their country as these, who are periling their lives for her and doing more than any and all other classes to save her. There is no other class of men whose rights we should hold so sacred. Then to convince them that we love them and stand by them, we should hasten to recognize all their rights and to facilitate their exercise. Moreover, that they may be inspired to do their utmost for their country they must see that they are regarded, not as her armed defenders only, but as still her citizens—and her citizens not robbed of, but protected in, their rights by their fellow-citizens whom they have left at home. A European army is for the most part made up of the dregs of the population—of men without acknowledged political rights and without character. Very different is our army. It is composed of those, who, besides being our superiors in patriotism and courage, are our equals in rights,

intelligence, and character. Let this be borne in mind by all who would disfranchise them. I add that there is no other class of men, whom we should feel ourselves so strongly bound to honor and to gratify in every possible way as our noble and beloved soldiers. Another argument for allowing the soldiers to vote is, that here one of them who is a Democrat and there one of them who is a Republican will, under some excuse or other, go home to play his part in deciding a hotly contested and doubtful election. This, besides damaging the efficiency of the army, furnishes just ground of complaint, now to one of the parties and now to the other. Nevertheless the temptation to this violation of duty is too strong to be successfully resisted by all. American citizens, educated, as they are, to prize the ballot, and accustomed, as they are, to cast it, can not easily school themselves into contentment with not casting it.

But it is claimed that the framers of the Constitution of our State intended that voting at our elections should be always in person and never by proxy. Our Pro-Slavery demagogues have made so much account of the Pro-Slavery words of some of the framers of the Federal Constitution, that the habit of interpreting a Constitution in the light of what its framers intended has come to obtain all over the country. But in point of fact the intentions of its framers as such are not to be allowed to enter at all into the interpretation and meaning of a Constitution—no, no more than the intentions of the scrivener, who wrote the deed, into the interpretation and meaning of the deed. What the people who adopted it intended by it is the only legitimate inquiry at this point: and what they intended by it is to be learned solely from its letter where that is unambiguous. Nay more—where the purpose is to defeat rights (and suffrage is among the highest rights) we are not at liberty to seek help outside of the letter of the Constitution.

The letter of the Constitution in the case before us is entirely free from ambiguity. It clearly leaves it to the Legislature to say how the voting shall be—whether in person or by proxy—whether it shall be all in one way—or a part in one way, and a part in another. It does say that a part of the voting shall be by ballot: and it might as easily have said that all voting shall be in person. But it does not say it. What it would have said, had it spoken on the point, is an utterly impertinent inquiry. Moreover, it is a fair, not to say irresistible inference that inasmuch as the Constitution does at one point and only one point prescribe the manner of voting, it intended to leave it to the Legislature to prescribe it at every other. I add that were it our custom to vote by proxy no one would regard such voting as repugnant to the Constitution. But clearly if with that custom it would not be unconstitutional, the lacking of that custom can not make it unconstitutional. Not custom, but the Constitution, determines what voting is Constitutional.

So far as the Constitution is concerned the Legislature may

provide that all the voting be by proxy. I admit that such a provision would be unwise. I admit too that I can conceive of no other case than that of the soldiers in which it would be wise. In their case it would be, not only for the reasons I have mentioned, but because the soldiers are so numerous. I would not, for the sake of accommodating a comparative handful of aged or infirm men, have our States allow so objectionable a mode of voting as is that by proxy. But for the sake of securing the rights of half a million to a million of soldiers I would not only have them allow it, but I would denounce the denial of it as unreasonable and unrighteous—a high crime against both the soldiers and the country.

For one I shout with joy, and I would have every other lover of his dear country and of her dear defenders do so, that there is not one line nor one word in our State Constitution against voting by proxy.

I said that our nation is ruined. She is. But I have never despaired of her recovery from her ruin. Few things inspire me with so strong a hope of this recovery as the growing disposition to let the army vote. They who meet the rebels face to face, know better how to vote than do we who keep ourselves at a safe distance from the foe. Ay, and they have better earned the right to vote. If either of us must be disfranchised—I, who remain amidst the comforts and safety of home, or he who welcomes the sufferings and perils of the soldier; I, who know the rebels but by hearing of them, or he, who knows them by seeing and feeling them; I, who but read of the battles, or he, who has part in them—then, in the name of reason and religion, it should be I and not he.

GERRIT SMITH.

PETERBORO, April 20th, 1863.

SPEECH AT LOYAL LEAGUE CONVENTION

IN

UTICA, MAY 26TH, 1863.

THIS strikes me as a very mottled assemblage, politically considered, and in a certain point of view, morally considered also. Here we are, Democrats and Republicans, temperance men and anti-temperance men, some one thing and some another, and there are soldiers among us. I see soldiers [applause] who have returned from the battle-field wet with the sweat of war, and some of them with its blood. They have returned to receive our benedictions and to be the witnesses of our enduring and deep gratitude for their heroic defense of our bleeding country. [Applause.] Now, what is the object that has had the power to collect this heterogeneous assemblage? I answer, it is a common cause. This is the mighty loadstone that has been able to draw us together, in spite of our mutual differences, in spite of our different views and different character. There are persons so bigoted and so impracticable as not to consent to come into a common cause. I know Democrats who, not even to save their beloved country—I can not say, however, how beloved to them—[laughter]—there are Democrats, I say, who not even to save this dear country, will consent to vote any other than a Democratic ticket; and I know Republicans who will not consent to vote any other but a Republican ticket; and I know Abolitionists, and I am ashamed of them, [laughter,] and even temperance men, who will not consent to work with any other than their own sort of people. But we, I thank God for it, are not such. We, though differing from each other at many points, can, nevertheless, when the nation calls for it, consent to work together. Now, I ask, what is this common cause which has drawn us together? Just here give me your special attention. I ask again, what is this common cause? Is it to save the Constitution? Oh! it is inexpressibly more than that. There are many good, patriotic men, who don't wish the Constitution saved as it is; they wish to have it altered. I, for one, would not have one word of it altered; I have pleaded for it with lips and pen, more than any Democrat, living or dead. I would not have one word in it altered. [Applause.] Well, if this common cause is not to save the Constitution, is it to save

the Union? Oh! no, unspeakably more than that. There are good men, and wise men, who do not like all the terms of our Union; I like them all. [Applause.] I have never taken in my life, with lips or pen, the slightest exception to any of them; and probably never shall. Well, is it, then, the saving of the country that is this common cause? It is not even that, for there are many good men who do not like the present boundaries of our country. They wish it to be made smaller. For my own part, every rood of it is dear to my heart. [Applause.] I would not have one star pass from the National flag. [Applause.] Not even poor South-Carolina. [Applause and laughter.] I love even South-Carolina. I love her for the memory of her noble men who stood by the side of our Revolutionary fathers. I love her for another reason; I love her for what she will become again when she shall have come out of her present degeneracy and madness. Well, now, if this common cause which has drawn us together is not the saving of the Constitution, nor the saving of the Union, nor the saving of the country, pray what, then, is it? My answer will be—and it will leap up from all your hearts to your lips—it is the putting down of this accursed and causeless Rebellion. [Applause.] That is the common cause that has drawn us together. And now, mark you, we all stand together at this point, where all good, and just, and patriotic men can and do stand with us. [Applause.] And then one thing more: that is the very point where unpatriotic and selfish men refuse to stand with us. The very point. And yet, some of these unpatriotic and self-seeking men, and traitors among them, are very eager to assure us of their intense regard for the Union and Constitution and country. But when we turn upon them with the question, “Are you for putting down the Rebellion?” they are found wanting. That is just the only test to apply to them, and under its application they fail. I recollect that more than thirty years ago, when Great Britain was agitated by the proposition to abolish British slavery, some Quakers supplied themselves with an image of a kneeling slave, and the appealing question running out of its mouth: “Am I not a man and a brother?” When the candidates for seats in Parliament would come round to these Quakers and solicit their votes, and tell them of the many fine things they would do if elected—things peculiarly acceptable to Quakers—these cunning Quakers would thrust in the face of these candidates this appealing image, and ask of them: “Can you go that? If you can’t go that, we can’t go you.” Just so do we deal with these men, when they prate about their love for the Constitution, the Union, and the country. I ask them, and you ask them, can you go for putting down the Rebellion? If you can’t go that, we can’t go you. Oh! why should we go these vile hypocrites—for such they are—who talk about being for the Constitution, and the Union, and the country, and yet go not for putting down the Rebellion, the putting down of which can alone save these blessings to us, and the triumph of which will rob us of

them all? And now we have before us but one duty; our one work is the work of putting down the rebellion. You have got to come to this point. I don't allow myself to be a co-worker with any one on earth who does not come to this point. The putting down of this Rebellion must be done, come what will to Constitution and Union, and even country. [Applause.] Can you go that? [Applause and cries of "Yes, yes."] For I hold that our duty to Justice, and putting down this Rebellion, is infinitely more commanding and absolute than any duty we owe to the Constitution or the Union, or even the boundaries of our country. I claim that we are to go for putting down the Rebellion unconditionally. Can you go that? You are not to say, we will consent to put down the Rebellion on condition of the saving of the Constitution, the saving of the Union, or the saving of the country. You are to say, we go for putting down the Rebellion unconditionally; and that is just where these traitorous enemies will not go along with us. [Applause.] What!—some one questions me—would you go for putting down this Rebellion with all the possible risks that the Union, the Constitution, and the country might go down with it? I answer, I would. I answer, I make no calculation at all at that point. My only duty has been, from the first, the putting down of this Rebellion. And here, some old Abolitionists, perhaps, would ask me: Do you go for putting down this Rebellion at all possible hazards, that Slavery may survive and be stronger than ever? I do. I run that risk. [Applause.] I have no conditions to make in behalf of any of my hobbies, and have not had since the day the news reached me at Peterboro of the bombardment of Sumter. [Applause.] And now let me here say, that in my philosophy, the putting down of crime can not bring any harm, to any good—can not bring any help to any evil. Hence the putting down of this rebellion, which is the crime of crimes, can not bring any possible harm to any good, in the Constitution, in the Union, or in the country, or in Freedom—none whatever. I call it the crime of crimes. Earth has never known a greater crime than this attempt to destroy a nation which had never done any thing to provoke that attempt—a nation which had always been not only just, but exceedingly partial, to those guilty of this piratical and murderous attempt. [Applause.] And now let me here say, that to make ourselves most effective in this work, we ought to cultivate earnestness. Oh! what an immense advantage the South has had over us in that respect! If all our early Generals—I beg your pardon, Mr. President, I didn't include yourself—[laughter]—you are too nearly kindred to me that I should do that—I say if our early Generals had had but a tithe of the earnestness that characterizes the South and Southern Generals, we should not have needed to be meeting here; the Rebellion would long ago have been ended. And there is one thing more we need to cultivate, and that is resentment. Can you go that? ["Yes, sir," and applause.] I know there is a sentimental, namby-pamby religion,

which takes fright at the idea of cultivating resentment. We need more resentment to fight the rebels as we ought to fight them. That has been our want all the way through. I recall a conversation with that great and good man, Theodore Parker, which I had a few years before his death—a conversation on the elements in human character. He claimed great credit for our power of hearty hating. That's like him; and were he now alive, you might be sure of having at least one hearty hater of the Rebellion. He would exclaim with the Psalmist: "Do not I hate them, O Lord! that hate thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred." Perhaps some one would remind me of the prayer: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." Now, I hold that this resentment is entirely compatible with the highest civilization and purest Christianity, and entirely consistent with forgiveness; but, moreover, these rascals *do* know what they do. [Great laughter and applause.] Our Saviour had none such in his eye when he prayed. [Applause.] They know what they do, and they do it with a hatred and with a will that puts to shame our indecision and gentleness. I say we must go unconditionally for putting down the Rebellion. And let me add, our loyalty is to be unconditional. We have tried our Government and we can trust it. [Applause.] I do not say that we are bound to agree with it in all its views of tariffs and other things; I do not say that we are bound to approve all its war measures even. It is entitled to our loyalty, because it has abundantly proved itself to be honestly and earnestly intent on putting down the Rebellion. I observed this forenoon a skittishness on one point—at the point of politics. A word on that. I have observed, I meant to say, that some persons are afraid that this grand Loyal League, into which I would have all right men of the North, South, East, and West enter, will become a party machine. Now, I would have this grand Loyal League a mighty power in politics. That's my view of it. [Applause.] I would have it work day and night to keep out of political office every man who is not unconditionally against the Rebellion. I do not say to keep out of office Democrats or Republicans, but every man who does not stand by the Government—who is not unconditionally for the Government. I have never in my life voted a Republican ticket; for I am, as I think, a Democrat of Democrats. Not a sham, spurious Democrat; but a man going for the equal rights of all men. [Applause.] If any man here can say, "I am a Democrat," I answer in Paul's words: "I, more." Our great work is before us. It is not to save the Union, or the Constitution, or the country; that is all prating. I do not want to hear a man speak about his love for his country, but rather about his hatred of the rebels. I will infer his love for his country from his hatred of the rebels. Put down the rebellion, and the Union, and the Constitution, and the country will take care of themselves. If a murderer should be discovered in Utica, the concern is to be, not for the safety of Utica, but to arrest and punish the murderer. Arrest and punish him, and Utica will take

care of herself. Nor do I want you to talk about what shall be done after the Rebellion is put down. The Rebellion is not put down yet, and we never shall put it down if we allow ourselves to be diverted from the actual and urgent duties of the present to speculations in regard to the future. The only problem, Mr. President, that we can solve to-day, is putting down the Rebellion. I would postpone every other thought to that solution. Let me add, "sufficient to the day is the evil thereof." We must grudge nothing; we must grudge no help, no precious treasure, no precious lives. Neither treasure nor life would be worth any thing to us, or any right-minded man, if this Rebellion were triumphant. If we should fail, we shall need no property to live on, for then we shall be sinking under loads of infamy and anguish of heart, and shall desire to live no longer. [Applause.]

SPEECH ON THE REBELLION AND THE DRAFT

IN

OSWEGO, JULY 29TH, 1863.

I AM embarrassed at the very outset. For I recollect that I am an abolitionist; and I recollect that in the public esteem he who is an abolitionist can not be a patriot. How then can I get a hearing from you? For surely you are not willing to hear any other than a patriot on National affairs. I must propitiate you if I can. I will try the power of a confession to that end. My confession is—that if a man can not be a patriot whilst yet an abolitionist, he should cease to be an abolitionist—that he should renounce his abolition if it at all hinders him from going for his country. I add that I go no longer for the Anti-Slavery Society, nor for the Temperance Society, no nor for my Church, if they go not for my country.

But what is it to go for one's country? Is it to go for her right or wrong? It is not. The true man goes for nothing in himself that is wrong. The true patriot goes for nothing in his country that is wrong. It is to go for all her boundaries, and to yield up no part of them to her enemy. It is to be unsectional—and to know no North and no South, no East and no West. It is to go for the unbroken and eternal union of all her sections. It is to love her with that Jewish love of country, which takes pleasure in her very stones and favors even the dust thereof. How very far then is he from going for his country who would surrender a part of her to appease the men who have rebelled against her! And let me here say that he does not go for her who, for the sake of securing the abolition of slavery, would consent to dismember her. Another way for going for one's country is to cling to her chosen form of government—in a word, to her Constitution. I do not mean that it is to prate for her Constitution and to affect a deep regard for it, whilst sympathizing with its open enemies—ay, and to affect this regard for the very purpose of thereby more effectively serving those enemies. It is, as in our case who have so excellent a Constitution, sincerely to value and deeply to love its great principles of justice, liberty and equality—those very

principles which caused the Southern despots to make war upon it and fling it away—those very principles which caused the Northern sympathizers with these despots to hate it in their hearts whilst yet their false lips profess to love it. To go for one's country is also to make great account of her cherished names and of all that is precious in her institutions, traditions, and memories. But of all the ways of going for one's country that of going against her enemies is at once the most effective and the most evidential of sincerity and earnestness.

Let us glance at some of our duties in this crisis.

In the first place, we are to stand by the Government. Not to stand by it is not to stand by the country. Were the Government unfaithful I would not say so. But it is faithful. It is intent on saving the country. And it is not the weak Government which it is accused of being. In both Houses of Congress the cause of the country has many able advocates. There are strong men in the Cabinet. The President is himself a strong man. His Pro-Slavery education is almost the only thing in him to be lamented. That education is still in his way. It was emphatically so in the early stages of the war. It entangled him with the Border Slave States, when he should have been free with the Free States. Nevertheless, I take pleasure in acknowledging both his ability and honesty; and this I do notwithstanding I did not vote for him and that I never voted for his party. Some of the richest and sublimest comments on the Declaration of Independence which I have ever read are from his pen. His letter to the officers of the Albany Democratic Convention, is a monument of his vigorous common-sense, of his clear and convincing logic, of his reasonableness and moderation, of his candor and frankness. On the whole, Washington always excepted, we have had no President who is to be more esteemed and beloved than Abraham Lincoln.

I said that not to stand by the Government is not to stand by the country. Every man who in time of war busies himself in slandering the Government and weakening the public confidence in it, is among the meanest and worst enemies of the country. How base and pernicious the slander that the Government is no longer prosecuting the war to save the country! A State Convention in Pennsylvania—and that too at the very time when the State was invaded and her capital threatened—improved upon this slander by deliberately resolving that the Government *avows* and *proclaims* that the saving of the country is no longer its object in the war. What wonder that there should be mobs against drafting soldiers when there are such incitements to such mobs!—when there is so much industry and so much art to persuade the people that the drafted soldiers are to be used, not for the one legitimate purpose, but for some sinister or party purpose! These mobs, though they fill us with sorrow, do nevertheless not surprise us. For we see them to be the natural and almost necessary fruit of those incessant declarations by unprin-

cipled politicians that the Government has turned away from the object of saving the country, and is now calling for men and money wherewith to promote other and odious objects. Upon these knavish and lying politicians rest the blame and the blood of all these mobs.

In the second place, we are to insist on the immediate and unconditional submission of the rebels. Nothing short of this would suffice for their humiliation and their good. Moreover, nothing short of this would save our Government and our country from being deeply and indelibly disgraced—ay, totally wrecked and ruined. Therefore there must be no armistice, no terms. To bargain with them; to give them time; to make concessions to them; to purchase peace from them; to make any peace with them, whilst as yet they have arms in their hands, would be to leave them with even a more incorrigible spirit than they now have, and it would also be to leave ourselves without a nation. That which would be left to us would be but a nominal nation—and it would be liable to be broken up in a twelvemonth. What is more, neither the world, nor we ourselves, could ever have any respect for it. A nation that is *compelled* to yield to traitors may be respected by both other nations and itself. But a nation which has power to overwhelm the traitors, and yet is too corrupt or cowardly to wield it, must be, ever after, a stench both in its own and in others' nostrils. In the light of what I have just said it is not too much to add that whilst Americans who counsel peace on any lower terms than the absolute submission of the rebels are traitors, those speakers and writers in foreign lands who do likewise are hypocrites, because they well know that what they counsel for our nation they would, were it counseled for their own, promptly and indignantly reject.

In the third place, we must not be speculating on what is to be done with the rebels after they shall be conquered. Such speculation is wholly unseasonable and it but tends to divide us. Whilst as yet the rebels are unconquered, we can not afford to be divided. The needless, foolish, guilty, and exceedingly hurtful differences among us are what alone make our conquest of the rebels uncertain. When we shall have conquered them, then we can talk to our heart's content of what should be done with them and their possessions. Besides, we know not now in what mood they will be then; and therefore we know not now what it will be proper for them to receive at our hands. If they shall be impenitent and defiant, we shall need to impose very careful restrictions upon them; but if penitent and humble, then we can risk being trustful and generous toward them. And then, too, notwithstanding their enormous crimes against their country—against earth and heaven—we shall gladly look upon our sorrowful Southern brethren as our brethren still.

In the fourth place, we must insist that other nations shall let us alone. Ours is a family quarrel, and none but the family can be allowed to meddle with it. We can tolerate neither intervention

nor mediation. We shall repel both. Mediation, proffered in however friendly a spirit, we shall regard as impertinence; and intervention, although bloodless and unarmed at the beginning, we shall from the beginning construe into war. And here let me add, that whilst we very gratefully acknowledge the able advocacy of our cause by many distinguished men of Europe, and no less gratefully the true, intelligent, and generous sympathy with it of the masses of Europe; and that whilst we would not discourage our citizens from going abroad to plead that cause; we, nevertheless, are entirely convinced that the work to be done for our country is to be done *in it*—to be done by earnest appeals from Americans to Americans, and by hard blows from a loyal upon a disloyal army.

Let us now pass on to consider what should be the character of our opposition to the rebellion. I said that the rebels must be unconditional in their submission. I add that our opposition to the rebels must also be unconditional. The surrender of ourselves to our high and holy cause must be absolute. We must stipulate for nothing. We must reserve nothing in behalf of our Democratic, or Republican, or Abolition, or Temperance, or any other party—nothing in behalf of any individual interests. Nay, we must make no conditions in behalf of either the Constitution or the country. We have now but one work. The putting down of the rebellion is the supreme duty which America owes to herself, to mankind, and to God. Is it said that recent events have given us another work to do? the work of putting down and keeping down mobs? I answer that these mobs are nothing more nor nothing less than Northern branches and Northern-outbreaks of the Southern rebellion, and that the rebellion ended, the mobs will also be ended. This, by the way, being the true character of these mobs, the Federal war power is as clearly bound to lay its restraining hand on those who get them up as on any other parties to the rebellion. It should spare no traitorous press, because of its great influence, and no traitorous politician, because of his high office, when it is clear that they have been at work to generate the passions and prejudices, the treason and anarchy which have resulted in disturbances, so frightfully marked, in some instances, by fire and blood.

These mobs, by the way, aside from their destruction of innocent and precious life, are not to be regretted. Nay, they are to be rejoiced in, because they reveal so certainly and so fully the animus of the leaders of this "Northern Peace Party," and therefore serve to put us more upon our guard against these desperate leaders. I am not at all surprised at hearing that many an honest man, who had sympathized with this party, is so far enlightened by these mobs as to turn away from it forever.

The motto of every man among us should be: "Down with the Rebellion at whatever cost!" It must go down, even though Constitution and country go down with it. If the rebellion is to live and triumph, then let all else, however dear, die.

Not Constitution nor country, not our farms nor our merchandise, not our families nor our own lives, could be any longer of value to us. Are there Republicans who, in this trial hour of integrity, are intent on keeping their party in power? then are they false to their country. In time of peace let there be parties to represent the different views in regard to the proper character and conduct of the Government. But in time of war to cling to party is treason to the country. For then the great question is, no longer as in time of peace, how the Government shall be shaped and administered, but the infinitely greater one—whether we shall have a country to govern. Are there Democrats who, at such a time, are intent on getting their party into power? False to their country are they also. Is it their plea that they are talking for the Constitution? I answer, that their talk should be against the rebels. This talking for the Constitution, whilst not talking against the rebels, is but hypocrisy. Are there Abolitionists who say that they can not help put down the rebellion unless the Government will pledge itself to put down slavery? Let me say, that with such one-idea men I have no sympathy. Like the sham Republicans and sham Democrats I have referred to, they are but workers for the rebels. To all who feel this unseasonable and treasonable solicitude for party, let me say that the true doctrine is: "Come what will of it to the Republican, or Democratic, or Abolition, or any other party—though they all go to flinders and be reduced to a heap of ruins—the Rebellion, nevertheless, shall be put down!" Moreover, notwithstanding our differences in other relations and other respects, we are all to be brothers and close fellow-laborers in the work of putting down the Rebellion. The laborers in this work we are not to know as Democrats, or Republicans, or Abolitionists, or Temperance men, but only as anti-rebellion men. During the greater part of my life I have tried to do something against slavery and drunkenness. But in this great battle against the Southern rebels and their Northern allies, whose success would, in its results, be the entire overthrow of free Government, not only here and in Mexico, but wherever it exists, I am ready to fight alongside of all who will fight alongside of me: with, if you please, the biggest drunkard on the one side and the biggest pro-slavery man on the other. Whilst I am against all who are for the rebels, I am for all who are against them. Until the Rebellion is crushed we should know but two parties: the one made up of those who, in standing by and strengthening the Government, prove themselves to be the friends of the country; and the other made up of those who, in assailing and weakening the Government, prove themselves to be the enemies of the country. Are there, I repeat, Abolitionists who, in such a time as this, stand back and refuse to join in putting down the Rebellion save on the condition that slavery also shall be put down? If there are, then are they also among those who embarrass the Government, and then are they also to be numbered with the enemies of the country. If there are such

Abolitionists, I am persuaded they are few. But whether they are few or many, let me say that it is very little to their credit to let the crime of slavery fill the whole field of their vision and blind them to the far greater and more comprehensive crime of the rebellion. Will they reply, that the rebellion is but slavery—slavery in arms? Then upon their own ground they should be helping to put it down, since the putting of it down would be the putting down of slavery also.

I referred to Mexico. If our rebellion shall succeed, her fate is sealed. If it should fail, then it may even be that Napoleon's is sealed. I say not that our Government would be disposed to meddle with him. But I do say that our people would be. Tens of thousands of our disbanded troops would hasten to Mexico to make common cause with their outraged republican brethren. I add, that whilst despots everywhere would exult in the triumph of our rebellion, despots everywhere will tremble at its overthrow.

Some of my hearers may think, because I said we must make no conditions in its behalf, that I am not suited with the Constitution. I am entirely suited with it. I have always opposed changes in it, and probably always shall. No Democrat even has spoken or written so much for it *just as it is* as I have. Let not a word in it be altered. It is exactly what we want of a Constitution, both in peace and war. Governor Seymour says, in his Fourth of July speech that the Government has suspended it. If it has, it has done very wrong. I do not see that it has in even the slightest degree. But there are some things which the Governor and I see with very different eyes. For instance, the Governor and the men of his school see that the blame of the war rests chiefly upon the North. On the other hand, I see that every particle of it rests on the South. They say that our talking and legislating against slavery annoyed the South; and we, in turn, say that her talking and legislating for it annoyed the North. But we deny that the annoyance did in either case justify war. As to the talking—it must be remembered that our Southern and Northern fathers agreed upon a Government, which tolerates talk—talk even against good things—against things which, if that be possible, are better than even slavery. So the South should not make war upon us because we talk against her slavery; and we should not make war upon her because she stigmatizes our noble farmers and noble mechanics as “the mudsills of society.” Then, as to the legislation, it must be remembered that whilst we were willing to have the constitutionality of ours passed upon by the Supreme Court of the United States, she threatened to murder and actually drove from her the honorable men whom we deputed to visit her for the purpose of getting her consent to such a testing of her pro-slavery legislation. Truly, truly do I pity the man who is so perverted as to divide the blame of this war between the North and the South. The North is not only mainly but entirely innocent of it.

I eulogized the Constitution. Let not the eulogy be construed into my overrating of a Constitution. I frankly say that if I thought that our Constitution stood at all in the way of our most effective prosecution of the war, I should rejoice to have it swept out of the way. The country is more than the Constitution. I would not exchange one of her majestic mountains or rivers for all the Constitutions you could pile up between earth and heaven. God made the country. But man made the Constitution. The loss of the country would be irreparable. But if the Constitution is lost, we will rely upon his inspirations of the human mind for another.

I spoke disparagingly of one-idea men. There is a sense in which I wish that all of us were one-idea men. I would that all of us might be one-idea men until the Rebellion is put down. To put it down—this, this is the one idea of which I would have every man possessed to the exclusion of every rival idea. For the sake of no other idea would I have conditions made with this paramount idea. Were we all such one-idea men the North would triumph speedily—and so grandly too as to win the admiration and esteem even of the South. And then would the North and the South again become a nation—not, as before, an inharmonious and short-lived one, but a nation at peace with itself, at peace with every other nation, and therefore a permanent nation. God grant us this glorious and blessed future! And he will grant it, if we are so manly and patriotic, so wise and just, as to postpone every other claim to that of our country and every other duty to that of putting down the Rebellion.

Let us now take up the Conscription Law. Some say that it is unconstitutional. I can not see any thing unconstitutional in it—though perhaps I could were I a lawyer. Some go so far as to deny that the Constitution gives Congress the right to compel persons to defend the country. All I can say is, that if it did not give the right, it should not have empowered Congress to declare war and raise and support armies. For thus to have empowered it was in that case but to mock it. It was only to seem to give much whilst really giving nothing.

For one, I do not look into the Constitution for proof that the National Legislature has the right to compel persons to fight the battles of the country. It is enough for me to know that this vital right inheres in a National Legislature—that the supreme power of a nation necessarily has it—and that a Constitution which should deny or in the slightest degree restrict it, would be fit only to be thrown away. For the credit of the Constitution, I am happy that it recognizes and asserts the right. But the Constitution does not create it. My refusal to look into the Constitution for the origination of this right rests on the same principle as that by which I am withheld from looking into the Bible for the origination of the parent's right to take care of his children. It is, I admit, one of the merits of this best of books that it recognizes the right and enjoins its exercise. But the right is older

than the Bible. It dates as far back as the time of the first parent. It is an inherently parental as the other is an inherently national right.

It is also said that the Conscription Law favors the rich, and oppresses the poor. The National and State militia laws do so; but the Conscription Law spares the poor and spares not the rich. Members of Congress, Postmasters, and a score of other classes, making in all no very small share of the men, are, under those laws, exempted from military service; whilst under the Conscription Law none but poor men are exempted, save only the Vice-President, the Heads of Departments, the United States Judges, and the Governors of the States. And now mark how numerous must be the several classes of the exempted poor.

1st. The only son of the widow dependent on his labor.

2d. The only son of aged or infirm parents dependent on his labor.

3d. One of the two or more sons of such parents.

4th. The only brother of orphan children not twelve years old dependent on his labor.

5th. The father of motherless children under twelve years of age dependent on his labor.

6th. Where there are a father and sons in the family, and two of them are in the army and in humble positions in it, the residue not exceeding two are exempt.

Now, was there ever a law less sparing of the rich and more tender to the poor? And yet this law, so exceedingly honorable to the heads and hearts of its makers, is denounced as oppressive and cruel by demagogues who, to get themselves into power, would destroy the popular confidence in the Government and destroy the country also.

But, it is held, that the commutation or three hundred dollar clause is oppressive to the poor. It is, on the contrary, merciful to the poor. But for it the price of a substitute might run up to three or four times three hundred dollars—a price which a poor man would scarcely ever be enabled to pay. The three hundred dollars, however, many a poor man can, with the help of friends, be able to raise. But why not, it may be asked, have favored the poor by making the maximum no more than fifty or a hundred dollars? This, instead of favoring, would have but oppressed the poor. For the Government, not being able to procure substitutes at the rate of fifty or a hundred dollars, would have been compelled to repeat its drafts. And thus tens of thousands of poor men who had paid their fifty or a hundred dollars in order to keep out of the army would after all be obliged to enter it.

Alas! this clamor against the unconstitutionality of the Conscription Law! How sadly it betrays the prevailing lack of patriotism! Had there been no unpatriotic person amongst us, there would have been not only nothing of this clamor, but not so much as one inquiry into the constitutionality of the law. The commonness of this inquiry indicates how commonly the love of

country must be very weak in the American bosom. Why is it so weak? Some say it is because of our characteristic or Yankee greed of gain; and some say it is because of our long-continued and soul-shriveling practice of persecuting and outraging an unfortunate race. Some ascribe it to one thing and some to another. But whatever the cause, the effect is obvious.

Oh! how base must they have become who, when rebels are at the throat of their nation, can hie themselves to the Constitution to see how little it will let them off with doing against those rebels—how little with doing for the life of that nation! Our noble Constitution should be used to nourish our patriotism; but alas! it is perverted to kill it!

I have noticed the action of the authorities of several of the cities of our State, in regard to the Conscription Law. In some of them this action is very bad. The sole object of the law is to raise an additional force for completing the destruction of the Rebellion. Now, the city of New-York and some other cities would take advantage of its humane feature of commutation to defeat this sole object of the law. For they would take advantage of it to buy off the mass of their drafted citizens. This wholesale buying violates to the last degree the spirit of the law; deprives the country of the benefit of the legitimate and intended effect of the law; and saves the Rebellion from being crushed by the faithful and fair carrying out of the law. If one city may resort to this wholesale buying, so may every other; so may every county, and so may every State; and so may the Conscription Law be rendered unavailing.

I admit the duty of the wealthy to avail themselves of this commutation clause to save, here and there, from going to the war the man to whom it would be a peculiar hardship to go. I also admit that every city, disposed to do so, can very properly vote the three hundred dollars to every drafted man who serves or to his substitute. I care not how much the cities help the soldiers. The more the better. I am glad that Oswego voted ten thousand dollars two years ago, and five thousand last spring to the families of her soldiers. Let her vote hereafter as much as she pleases to the soldiers and their families. I will pay cheerfully what share of the tax shall fall on my property in the city; and more cheerfully would I take part in voluntary contributions.

I have sometimes heard the remark that neither the rich nor the poor should be allowed to procure substitutes. The remark is both ill-natured and foolish. Among the drafted will be both rich and poor men, who ought to be spared from going to the war. I am not sorry that so many rich men have gone to the war. Nevertheless, let as many rich men as will remain at home to continue to give employment to the poor in manufactories and elsewhere, and to maintain a business and a prosperity which can be heavily taxed to meet the expenses of the war. Men of property should be heavily taxed to this end; and my only objection to the

Income Tax, is that it is not more than half large enough. It should be six and ten instead of three and five per cent.

But I must close. How unreasonable, how unpatriotic, how wicked to murmur at this draft! The South, to serve her bad cause, is, at this moment, responding to the call for absolutely all her able-bodied white males between the ages of eighteen and forty-five; whilst the call to serve our best of all causes is for not more than about one seventh or one eighth between those ages. And yet we murmur at the draft; and in a few localities there is a rabble so far under the sway of traitorous demagogues, as to resist it with force and arms. These demagogues, by the way, as silly as they are wicked, instead of seeing in this resistance only another argument with the Government for proceeding promptly, very promptly with the draft, flattered themselves that the Government would succumb to the mobs and abandon the draft; would surrender to anarchy instead of maintaining law.

Our people need to be loyally educated. When they are, they will be eager to serve their imperiled and beloved country in any way, however expensive or hazardous. I rejoice to see that in many parts of the country the draft is met in a cheerful and patriotic spirit. May this spirit soon obtain everywhere

The love of country—the love of country—that is what we lack. Would that we had somewhat of that love of country which Robert Emmet felt for his dear Ireland; somewhat of that love of country which awakens the sublime utterances of Kossuth for his dear Hungary; somewhat of that love of country which stirs the great soul of Garibaldi, as he contemplates his still, but not-ever-to-be, disunited Italy; somewhat of that love of country which arms her young men, ay and her young maidens too, to battle for their down-trodden and dear Poland! Let us have somewhat of such love—and then when our bleeding country makes her call upon us, we shall not pause to inquire whether it is couched in Constitutional words; but we shall hasten to obey it, simply because it is our country that makes it, and our country that needs our obedience.

SPEECH AT YOUNG MEN'S MASS CONVENTION;

IN

SYRACUSE, SEPTEMBER 3D, 1863.

It was my good fortune to be in the Convention when the President's admirable and unanswerable letter was read—was so well read—so dramatically and effectively read. I felt at the close of it, that we could afford to adjourn the Convention at that moment *sine die*. I felt that we would be warranted in returning to our homes and telling our neighbors that we had been in the best Convention we had ever been in; and that the President's letter was of itself a full feast for the patriotic heart. But the Convention desired speaking also. They have had from Lieut.-Governor Noble a speech that kindled their patriotism to the highest pitch, and that convulsed them with its abounding wit. The man who follows him with a plain speech is at no little disadvantage. Nevertheless, it is wholesome to have a little plain fare mixed up with our rich fare. There is another embarrassment that I am under. I am so delighted with the President's letter that I do not know that I shall be able to compose myself to make a sober speech; and I should be sorry to have my speech marked with the intoxication of joy.

We read that on a certain occasion Moses stood and said: "Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me." He did not ask: "Who is of the tribe of Judah or Benjamin, or who is of any other tribe—who is of this party or that—who has these views or those?" His simple and sole inquiry was: "Who is on the Lord's side?"

And so when traitors have risen up to destroy our nation, there is but one question for us to put. It is: "Who is on the side of the country?" By the way, none who at such a time do not hasten to the side of their country, can give much evidence of being on the Lord's side.

Why is it, gentlemen, that I am here? It is thirty-five years this year since I have taken part in a Democratic, or a Whig, or a Republican meeting; and I never in my life was in a Native American meeting. If only because one of my grand-parents was born in Ireland, it would be ungracious in me to countenance a

meeting which is a meeting against the foreign-born. I am here, gentlemen, because I heard you call: "Who is on the side of the country?" Once some of you were members of the Democratic party; and your call then was: "Who is on the side of the Democratic party?" Once some of you were of the Republican party; and your call then was: "Who is on the side of the Republican party?" For one I did not listen to either call. I was too much interested in other things to be much interested in party politics. But now when your call is, "Who is on the side of the country?"—now, when I see you have sunk party in patriotism and are making more account of country than of the sum total of all other earthly interests—now, I am quick to hear you and glad to come to you. Now; I am with you "arm and soul." Now my lot is cast in with yours. And now I exclaim from the heart: "*Una spes unaque salus ambobus erit.*"

I commend you, gentlemen, for your giving up of party. I say not that political party should never be. On the contrary, I admit that honest and wide differences of opinion in regard to the proper character and conduct of Government, may render party justifiable, if not indeed necessary, in time of peace. But in time of war, when the question is whether there will be a Government left us to differ about—nay, whether there will be so much as a country left us to govern—then clearly all should give up party, and join hands to save the country. The Republican party has done well to disband. Alas! that the Democratic party did not also disband!

Party in time of war is the greatest of all evils and the heaviest of all curses. I am so old as to remember the war of 1812–15; and to remember how party then divided the country and her councils; and how party interests, and the Hartford Convention, and other party measures brought the country to the brink of ruin. Of course we all remember how quick was party in our present war to raise its snaky, hissing, hated head. No sooner had the President called for the seventy-five thousand men to save the country from the traitors who were threatening to march upon it, than party sent up the cry that the war was unconstitutional. While patriotism was calling out earnestly to save the country, party was calling out hypocritically to save the Constitution. The really humane would save the drowning man. The pretendedly humane are very solicitous to save his hat. The conventional and fashion-bound Englishman would not rescue the drowning man, because he had not been introduced to him. The Englishman's order of doing things was, first to be introduced to the man and afterward to save him. With no less absurdity do these demagogues put the saving of the Constitution before the saving of the country. For a quarter of a century I have spoken and written abundantly for that instrument—for that instrument just as it is—line for line and letter for letter. But now, when my country is in such fearful peril, my absorbing concern is to save her. I would save her with the Constitution if I could; but with or without the

Constitution I would save her. The country is more than the Constitution. Much do I love the Constitution; but I love my country infinitely more. Let me, however, here say, that I know not that the Government has claimed any unconstitutional power in the prosecution of this war. It certainly did not need to. The Constitution gives all needed power for the most effective prosecution of the war.

It was the Democratic party that was appealed to (and alas so successful!) by this cry to save the Constitution. I am not saying that this party was less worthy than the Republican party. Had the Democratic party been in power when the war broke out, it would, I trust, have conducted the war loyally and vigorously, and successfully; and the Republican party, had it in that case kept up its organization, would, I fear, have proved as factious and disloyal as the Democratic party has proved itself. I care not what party it is—Republican or Democratic—if it keeps up its organization in time of war, it will soon show that it sets party above the country. This will be emphatically true if it is a party against those who are carrying on the war. Nothing has gone further to show the selfishness, baseness, and treasonableness of the Democratic party than its incessant claim through this war, that the war can never be brought to a successful close but by the Democratic party. How we are disgraced in the eyes of Europe by this declaration, that our country can be saved not by the country, but by party! And how much encouragement it has ministered to the rebels!

But some of you may be disposed to remind me that the old Democratic party kept up its organization during the last war. It did, and the blame of it was due quite as much to the Federal party as to the Democratic. The keeping up of the Federal organization provoked the keeping up of the Democratic. The truth is, that neither of these parties was what it should be. The Democratic party favored France and the Federal party favored England. The Democratic party followed the fortunes of the elder Napoleon, and the Federal party was not yet weaned from its degrading partiality for England. Not until after our last war with England were our political parties above serving foreign powers.

Let us glance at some of the evils that have sprung from the maintenance of party organization during this war.

First, during the whole war, party has been calling on the government to compromise with the rebels and patch up a peace with them. And this, too, notwithstanding the rebels have incessantly replied that they would consent to no peace with us but on the condition of their being allowed to dismember the nation and become entirely independent of us. Party has even gone so far as to propose that we come under the Southern or Montgomery Constitution. But even at this point she has spurned us. On no terms, however advantageous to herself or humiliating to us, would she consent to live with us. The degrading attitude toward her, during this war, of many of our Northern politicians

has very much increased her contempt of us. She always despised us for our truckling to her.

And what if the rebels were willing to make peace with us, could we consent to make peace with them, whilst as yet they have arms in their hands, without covering our nation with infamy, and sinking it in ruin? Certainly not. We are not now to make peace with them; but we are to insist on their unconditional submission; and we are to keep on pursuing and pressing and punishing them until we have brought them to it. Unconditional must be our opposition to the rebels, and unconditional must be their submission to us. We are to carry on the war, stipulating for nothing in behalf of our Democratic, or Republican, or Abolition party, or tariffs, or aught else; and they are to lay down their arms, stipulating for nothing in behalf of their houses, or lands, or slaves, or free trade, or aught else.

The question is often put whether we would consent to receive back a Rebel State. Certainly we would. On what conditions? it is asked. On the condition of her unconditional surrender. But on what conditions beyond that? it is asked. We rejoin that we have not one word to say, nay, hardly one thought to think about further conditions until the first one has been complied with and she has surrendered absolutely. When our child has revolted against our parental authority, he is first to submit to it ere he is entitled to even the least intimations of what will be our subsequent treatment of him. It will be time enough after her submission to say, and perhaps time enough even to think, what we shall do with her after her submission. To take up that question now is but to multiply divisions among ourselves, and to make it uncertain whether we shall be able to compel her submission. The rebels, guilty, without the least provocation, of attempting to destroy our nation, are surely entitled to know nothing of what we shall do with them after we have conquered them. They must resign themselves to our measure of justice, generosity, and forgiveness; and I trust, that they will not find us greatly lacking in these virtues. For one I have never taken pleasure in this talk about banishing, imprisoning and hanging the rebels. Our Southern brethren some of them are very wicked, and more of them deeply deluded. But they are our brethren still; and I hope that should we succeed in conquering them, we shall be disposed to make every concession to them which is compatible with their safety and ours, their welfare and ours.

I notice that the Democratic leaders are very desirous to save Slavery. I admit that we should be very desirous to save every very good thing; and I am not denying that Slavery is a very good thing. But these leaders go further and insist that in the putting down of the Rebellion, Slavery shall be saved. In this, however, they are as wrong as are those abolitionists who insist that the putting down of the Rebellion shall be conditioned on the putting down of Slavery. But the true doctrine on this point is that the Rebellion shall go down, whether Slavery shall or shall

not go down with it. Our one common work is to put down the Rebellion; and no part of that one common work is to put up or to put down Slavery. I readily admit that a people may suffer wrongs so deep as to justify them in breaking up their national relations. But the only wrong we ever did the South was, to indulge her and let her have her own way. I confess that we did in this wise contribute largely to spoil her. This is our only offense against her.

I proceed in my mention of some of the evils which have grown out of the maintenance of party during this war. From the first, party has been so unpatriotic and insane as to object to our accepting the help of the negro. Whenever it has been proposed to let him fight for us, party, playing upon the popular prejudice against the negro, has objected to turning the war into a war for the negro. I admit that it is not a war for the negro, and that it is not a war for the abolition of Slavery. I admit that it is a war for nothing else than to put down a base, brutal, abominable, causeless, accursed Rebellion. But how disingenuous, how wicked, how absurd to say that letting the negro fight for us is turning the war into a war for the negro! As well might it be said that letting the Indians fight for us is turning it into a war for the Indians. I have seen within a few days that the Kansas Indians offer us their assistance in punishing the plundering and murderous invaders of Kansas. Shall we decline this assistance for fear that accepting it will give the Democrats another occasion for charging us with perverting the war?

Common-sense teaches us that we should get the negro to help us if we can; and the Indian also if we can; and the devil himself if we can. I would that we could succeed in getting our harness upon his back and in making him work for us. It would by the way, be doing a great favor to the old rascal to make him serve a good cause once in his life. To serve so good a cause as ours would improve even so bad a character as the devil's.

And here let me say that had the Government brought negroes into the Army as fast as it should, (and it should have brought them in as fast as it could,) there would have been no need of this draft, which is so trying to the North. Very trying it is, if only because our innumerable departments of industry, which are all so especially active at this time, can not well spare any laborers. Why did not the Government take the black man who wanted to fight for us, and spare the white man who preferred to remain in his family and business? I blame the Government at this point. It is true that I blame the Democratic party for keeping up its clamor against using the black man, and for thus making the Government afraid to use him. But I blame the Government also for allowing itself to be frightened out of its duty. I admit that the Government has shown itself strong at many points. But there is one point where it has been wont to show itself weak. I refer to its excessive desire to propitiate the Democratic party and

avoid its censure. Its true policy was to study to please its friends rather than to avoid displeasing its enemies. Nevertheless, I like the government. It is an honest, patriotic, and able government. I say this though I did not vote for it, and though I never voted the Republican ticket. I say it, too, though I had the same cause for rebelling against the government which the South had. She rebelled because Lincoln was elected. But Lincoln was no more my candidate than he was hers. If she might rebel simply because an election went against her, so might I when one went against me. There is this difference between the South and myself; I stand by the country, however an election may go; and she tries to destroy it if an election does not go to suit her. I add here in connection with what I said a little way back, that it is not for Democrats to denounce the draft. Their party was opposed to letting negroes come into the army, and so white men had to be drafted into it. It is the policy of his own party that compels the drafted Democrat to serve in the place of the negro. The negro stood ready to serve in the place of the white man; but the Democratic party would not consent to it.

I go on to say that the late mobs are amongst the sad fruits of keeping up party in time of war. These mobs were an open joining of Northern traitors with Southern traitors. Shouts for the Southern traitors were often heard in them. None but enemies of the Government and friends of the rebels were in them. In a word, none but Democrats. Can the Democratic party live under so damning a fact? I think not. Had it disbanded when the war broke out, there would have been none of these mobs to disgrace and damn it. There would then have been no demagogues to get them up; no Vallandighams and Woods to talk and write treason; and no newspapers to print it, and urge the Governor Seymours to practice it.

I need mention no more of the workings and fruits of this maintenance of party in time of war. Said I not well that such maintenance is the greatest of all perils and curses? As soon as war begins party should be dropped. The demagogue, who after that keeps on juggling with party names and party words, is the most dangerous enemy of his country. For in this wise he is able to lead against his country in time of war the many who, with comparative harmlessness, had been accustomed to follow him in time of peace. No men at the South—not even the Davis's and Stephens's—are so dangerous to us as these Northern demagogues who in time of war slander and embarrass the Government; poison and pervert the public mind; get up mobs; and succeed in electing to office men who are in sympathy with the South. Our motto should be, "No party in war."

Again, I say that our common work now is to put down the Rebellion. Come what will of the putting of it down to the Democratic or Republican or Abolition party, it must be put down. Come what will of it to Slavery or Anti-Slavery, it must be put down. Slavery may be *incidentally* helped or harmed by it. But

neither the helping nor harming of it is an *object* of this one common work.

By all, then, that is precious in our country, which they are so fearfully imperiling by continuing in the Democratic party, would I exhort the honest masses of that party to quit it. And I would have them join no other until the Rebellion is crushed. I do not exhort them to quit it because it is the Democratic party, but simply because it keeps up its organization in time of war. When peace shall return to bless our blood-soaked land, they can again, if they please, become members of the Democratic party. I say nothing against either a Democratic or a Republican party, only that neither should be kept up in time of war.

By all, too, that is precious in a good name—a good name to be enjoyed by ourselves and to be transmitted to our children—would I exhort the honest masses of the Democratic party to quit it. The boldest and most unprincipled portion of its leaders will stamp its character; and necessarily, therefore, it will be a very black one—so black as to reflect not a little disgrace upon every man who belongs to the party. Why will the memory of the Vallandighams and Woods rot—or if it live, live but to be loathed? Because they were guilty of the crime, ay, of the treason, of clinging to party in war, and of using party against their country. And why will the Dickinsons and Butlers be ever bright and beautiful upon the page of history? Because when war came they gave up party for country.

By all, too, that is mortifying in a signal and utter failure, would I exhort the honest masses of the Democratic party to quit it. The Rebellion will go down. It will go down into the lowest depths of infamy, destruction, and despair. And the Democratic party, because its leaders have identified it with the Rebellion, will go down with the Rebellion. Yes, it will go down as disgraced, as deep and as dead as the Rebellion. The Federal party had to die immediately after our last war with England, because it had placed itself in the way of our Government's prosecution of that war. The Democratic party is opposing the Government's putting down of the guiltiest enemies a nation ever had; and therefore the Democratic party must also die.

Let me, in closing, say, that not only traitorous Democrats will find their damnation in this war; but that every other man, be he Republican or Abolitionist, will find it, if he traitorously refuses to identify himself with the endeavors of our honest and earnest Government, and of our brave and immortalized army and navy to put down this infernal Rebellion. No one of them all—if, indeed, any moral sensibility can survive in him—but will feel, under the outpourings upon him of the world's scorn and disgust, that it were better for him had he never been born.

THE REBELLION.

SPEECH IN MONTREAL, DEC. 19TH, 1863.

I CHOSE this time for visiting Montreal because I saw in the newspapers that a case involving the reputation of one of my old and dear friends (Hon. J. R. Giddings) was to be tried in your courts at this time. Being in your city, I was not only willing but glad to consent to make a speech on the state of my country.

I love Canada. My own mother was born on the banks of your Sorel. It has ever been my desire that my country and yours should be peaceable and pleasant neighbors. I was a member of the American Congress when, nine years ago, it sanctioned the Reciprocity Treaty between us. Other members may have worked for that sanction more influentially and efficiently, but none worked harder for it than I did. It is extensively believed in my country that the treaty is more advantageous to you than to us; and I notice a present movement in Congress for discontinuing it. I hope that it and every other movement to this end may fail. I love the treaty. I love it, because it tends to promote friendly intercourse and to multiply ties between us. This is, in my judgment, far more important than to make money out of it. I am, myself, in favor of an absolutely free trade. I would not have a custom-house on the earth. I believe that the great and good Father of us all would have his children left free to buy and sell in all the markets. I would, of course, have the exchanges between nations include merchandise and manufactures. But if there are nations that refuse to include them, I, nevertheless, would not have my nation refuse to exchange natural productions with such nations.

My country is sorely afflicted. A Rebellion, the most gigantic and also the most guilty the world ever saw, has broken out against her. Nevertheless, all Canadians do not sympathize with her. I do not infer this from the fact that persons within her borders have recently sought to make Canada a base of military operations against us. These persons, I doubt not, were nearly all refugees from my own country. I am sure the Canadians did not countenance the crime. Nor did their Government. Nay, I am informed that it was some one in their Government (thanks to that some one!) who informed Lord Lyons of the plot. Thanks

to Lord Lyons also, who, as the story runs, left his bed at midnight to inform my Government of it! No, it is not from this that I infer the lack of Canadian sympathy. It is from other things, and especially from the spirit of many of the Canadian newspapers. There are Canadian newspapers, and some of them are in this city, that speak rightly of our Rebellion. I read the *Toronto Globe*: and I would that all your newspapers spoke of the Rebellion in the spirit in which that able and excellent newspaper speaks of it.

I said that I love Canada. I add that I love Great Britain also. Toward her as well as toward Canada I stand in filial relations. For my mother's mother was born in green Ireland: and if having a Livingston for a grandfather makes a Scotchman, then am I a Scotchman also. But more than this, all men of my advanced age, whose childhood's language was the English, are more or less educated by Great Britain. Our manners, habits, characters come in no small degree from the moulding influences of her statesmen, historians, poets, and novelists.

I referred to the lack in Canada of sympathy with my distressed country. There is the like lack in Great Britain also. I do not infer it from her acknowledgment of belligerent rights in the rebels. I justify that acknowledgment: and my country should feel herself estopped from complaining of it by the fact that she found herself obliged to accord these rights to the rebels. The simple truth is, that the rebels were too numerous to be treated as pirates and outlaws. Just here however let me say that burning captured ships at sea is not among belligerent rights. If the rebels have no ports into which to take the captured vessel for adjudication, then so far they have no belligerent rights. Nor do I infer this lack of British sympathy from the fact that British-built vessels have gone out from British ports to be used by the rebels in preying upon the commerce of my country. I am sure that the people of Great Britain do not approve this: and the British Government is giving honorable and satisfactory testimony that it also does not approve it. Moreover, not only the British conscience but the British interest is against it. For Great Britain to justify or to suffer this indirect war upon us would be to leave herself without cause of complaint when in turn we should treat her so. That we should be provoked to such retaliation is well-nigh certain. Nor do I argue this lack of sympathy in Great Britain from her treatment of us in the Trent affair—wrong as I think it to have been. A word about that treatment. I will, if you say so, admit that international law was on her side in that affair. I will, if you say so, admit that there was no impropriety, no indecency, no affectation in the firing up of her indignation at that in our one vessel the like of which we had suffered from many scores of her vessels. And I will too, if you say so, admit that her Government had the right to make no account of the certain knowledge it had seasonably come into possession of, that our Government had not indorsed the acts of Captain Wilkes. Never-

theless, after making all these admissions, I must still hold that in the Trent affair your country did mine a great and a grievous wrong. For without giving a moment's time for negotiation she virtually declared war: loading her cannon and lighting the match, and giving us but time to fall down upon our knees and beg her pardon. And all this too when we had upon our hands a most fearful civil war. And all this too when she knew that Captain Wilkes did not only not intend any wrong to British interests, but did intend to preserve them all most carefully. And all this too when she knew that Captain Wilkes's not taking the Trent into port for adjudication was because of his deep desire to save her and the interests embarked in her from inconvenience and loss. But you will say that Captain Wilkes insulted the British flag. To this I answer that there is not the slightest evidence that he intended to. Nevertheless he did, will be your rejoinder. I know what is the British spirit—the British jealousy—in regard to the British flag, and especially when it floats over a ship—for Britain is even more of a water than land-fowl. I will not say aught in derogation or complaint of this spirit. But this much I will say—that on the same wise and Christian principle that an individual should not return an insult with a blow, a nation should not. England regards herself, and I will not say unjustly, as the foremost nation in Christian civilization. But how sad that a nation thus advanced should be ready to go to war for a point of honor! Perhaps you will say that my own nation would do so. I fear she would. This, however, would only show that my nation, like yours, has not yet risen into obedience to all the laws of Christ.

No, it is not from the things I have mentioned that I argue Britain's lack of sympathy with my greatly afflicted country. I argue it from the tone of a large share of the British press; from a class of speeches made in many British meetings and the responses to them; and from the reports of many Americans, who, in their visits to England, frequently encounter, in both high places and low, expressions of very ill feeling toward my country.

I proceed to ask why it is that so many Britons on both sides of the Atlantic sympathize with the rebels.

First. Is it because of a jealousy of our vast and mighty Republic? *It is*, said one of your intelligent citizens to me, as I sat in the car by his side, the morning I entered your city: and this gentleman justified the jealousy. But I hope he was wrong in ascribing this British sympathy to so unworthy a cause. We certainly ought to accord to every people their choice of government. I am not myself for the "Monroe Doctrine" to the extent that most of my countrymen are. If Mexico prefers a monarchical government, I would let her have it. And I say this notwithstanding my life-long advocacy of the most ultra democratic theories of government. I would leave Europe free to persuade all republican America to adopt monarchy. On the other hand America should be left free to attempt the conversion of monarchical Europe. But in neither case compulsion.

Second. Does this British sympathy for the rebels spring from faith in the doctrine of "Secession"? This doctrine grows out of the claim that the States, which compose the United States, are nations—are sovereignties—notwithstanding they have not sovereign power enough to coin a sixpence. How strange if they are indeed nations and sovereignties, that England has never found it out before! She, in common with all Europe, has gone on maintaining diplomatic relations with our one nation at Washington, instead of with a score or two of nations at Boston, New-York, Baltimore, New-Orleans, etc. Then if these States are all nations and sovereignties, our Constitution must surely show so important a fact. But it shows that the people of the United States (and by the way, not the *States* of the United States) made, not a plurality of Constitutions for a plurality of nations, but one Constitution for one nation. And how absurd is the doctrine that our one nation is the agent of a score or two of nations! An agent is held to be inferior to his principals, inasmuch as they appoint and commission him. But in this case the agent, if agent he be, is immensely superior to his principals:—for instead of their watching him and having power over him, he watches them and has power over them. For instance, he is to see to it that they maintain a republican form of government. And so, too, instead of his being governed by their laws, they are governed by his—and that too even when his are right in the face of theirs. And what is still more degrading to these claimed-to-be principals, they are required to swear allegiance to him instead of his being required to swear allegiance to them. How humiliating it must have been to his brethren's sheaves if they had actually to do obeisance to the boy Joseph's sheaf! And how humiliating it must have been to the sun and moon and eleven stars if they too had actually to make obeisance to him! But scarcely less humiliating to the numerous States in the United States is their submission to the one reputed nation of the United States, if they are all nations, and this one reputed nation is not a nation; or if, in other words, they are the principals and this but their agent. The doctrine of the right of our States to secede is simply ridiculous. That the people, in adopting the Constitution, voted by States was a convenience, which could not well be dispensed with. But it was a *necessity* also, inasmuch as in this wise only could the assent of the people of each State to that loss of State rights and State sovereignty, which the Constitution called for, be obtained.

Third. Was it because the Southern States were oppressed by a High Tariff, that Britons sympathized with them? But the Morrill or High Tariff was not enacted until the March after the December in which the States began to secede. And, by the way, one justification for enacting it was that our Government would needs its avails in reducing those States. We never had a Tariff so welcome to the Southern States as that we had when the Rebellion begun. None of our previous tariffs made so great ap-

proaches to the policy of Free Trade. But no tariff, high or low, is an excuse for War.

Fourth. Was this British sympathy with the rebels caused by the growing disposition in my country, as indicated by the triumph of Freedom in Kansas, to keep Slavery out of the Territories? But there is nothing in the Constitution to forbid the growth of such a disposition: and I would hope that there is nothing in your hearts to forbid it.

Fifth. Was the election of Mr. Lincoln the cause of this sympathy? I confess that it was no small trial of Southern patience to have a man elected to the Presidency, who was opposed to letting Slavery go into the Territories. But the Constitution, which allowed the election of his Pro-Slavery predecessors, equally allowed his election. The North did not rebel because of the former: and the South should not have rebelled because of the latter. Submission to the will of the majority lies at the very foundation of the Government chosen and constructed by the American fathers.

Sixth. Was this sympathy because of the Northern talk and Northern legislation against Slavery? But free speech is expressly provided for in our Constitution: and hence the South had no more right to rebel when we denounced her system of slave-labor than we had when she was stigmatizing our noble farmers and mechanics as "mudsills" and "greasy fists." As to the legislation against Slavery, the North was always ready to have the Supreme Court of the United States pass upon its Constitutionality. There was legislation at the South in favor of Slavery, which the North believed to be unconstitutional. She began to send down Commissioners to the South to invite her to unite with them in measures for bringing such legislation under the review of that Court. But these Commissioners were threatened with murder and forcibly expelled.

Seventh. Finally, do Britons sympathize with the Rebellion because the Rebels saw that Slavery was unsafe in the old nation and under the old Constitution: that in order to maintain, extend, and perpetuate it, they must have a new nation with Slavery for its boasted corner-stone—a new nation whose Constitution would recognize property in man as fully and absolutely as it exists in brutes? Such a Constitution they already have; and such a nation they are trying to have. And here let me say, that to have such a Constitution and such a nation was their sole object in rebelling. As to the election of Lincoln, they were more glad of it than sorry for it, since it furnished them, for use among the ignorant and undesigning, with a pretext for the Rebellion. The Northern Anti-Slavery legislation was also, on the whole, welcome to them, since it too helped furnish them with this pretext. As to the Northern talk against Slavery, they of course knew that they could not get away from it by getting out of the nation. I need not add that the Tariff was not amongst their grievances—for it was already low, and had they remained in the nation they could have made it low-

er. I ask again, do Britons sympathize with the Rebellion because it originated in the motive of serving and advancing Slavery? But Britons are opposed to Slavery:—and how therefore can they regard with favor an undertaking to “lengthen the cords and strengthen the stakes” of Slavery?—an undertaking never before known—that is, to create a nation solely for the slaveholder?*

I have done with asking why Britons sympathize with the Rebellion. I hear of no worthy reason for it. There can be none. I will now pass on to mention two grounds on which your sympathy with my country is claimed, and on neither of which you are bound to sympathize with it.

First. There are writers and orators at the North, who ask the world to favor the cause of the North on the ground that she is prosecuting the war for the overthrow of Slavery. But she is not prosecuting it for that purpose. It is true that slavery has been much damaged by the war:—only incidentally, however. It is true that Slavery will lose its life in this war. The first gun discharged at Sumter shot death into Slavery. From that moment it has never been possible to save it. On the other hand, it is also true that the Government, in carrying on the war, has aimed neither to uphold nor overthrow Slavery. It has aimed simply to suppress the Rebellion and preserve the nation. This has been its only object: and whenever it has touched Slavery it has been but to subserve and secure this object.

I further admit that, whilst there are many persons (shame to them!) who would have the Government pervert the war into a war for upholding Slavery, there are on the other hand a few persons, chiefly Abolitionists of misguided zeal, who would have the Rebellion put down only on the condition that Slavery be put down with it. Some of them claim that they herein conform to God’s policy. But I must believe that they misinterpret God. My own philosophy teaches, that God would have us put down every sin (and where is there a greater sin than this Rebellion?) unconditionally, uncalculatingly, uncompromisingly. My own philosophy teaches, that we are never to wait, not even an hour nor

*Alexander H. Stephens, the Vice-President of the Confederacy, and an eminently intellectual man, is good authority for saying, first, that the North gave the South no cause to rebel; secondly, that to serve and advance the interests of Slavery was the object of rebelling. In his speech of November fourteenth, 1860, in the Hall of the House of Representatives of Georgia, Mr. Stephens, who as yet opposed the Rebellion, said: “What right has the North assailed? What interest of the South has been invaded? What justice has been denied, or what claim founded in justice and right has been withheld? Can any of you to-day name one governmental act of wrong deliberately and purposely done by the government at Washington of which the South has a right to complain? I challenge the answer.” Then in the month of March, 1861, and when, notwithstanding his earnest attempts to lay the storm, he found himself swept away by it, and made the second officer in the new nation, he declared in his speech in Savannah, that “the new Constitution had put at rest forever all the agitating questions relating to” Slavery; and that “our new Government is founded upon exactly the opposite ideas” of the old Government and “upon the great truth that Slavery is his (the negro’s) natural and moral condition.”

a moment, to put down a sin, in the hope that by waiting we shall be able to drag down some other sin with it. The sins of earth will go down quickest if we try to put down each as soon as we can.

Second. Your sympathy with the cause of my country is also claimed by Northern orators and writers on the ground that whilst the Southern people are Pro-Slavery the Northern are quite extensively Abolitionists. But you should not sympathize with us on this ground, for it is a false one. It is true that the North is immeasurably less Pro-Slavery than the South: and that in the progress and through the teachings of this war, it is constantly becoming less and less Pro-Slavery. But it is also true that no large proportion of the people of the North are as yet Abolitionist. Our evil inheritance of Slavery from England, whilst corrupting to the very core the people of the South, corrupted very deeply the people of the North also. At the North as well as at the South "Abolitionist" is still the most reproachful, odious, and shunned of all names. Not only do the people of the South, but very generally the people of the North also, refuse to sit at table or in the house of worship by the side of the black man. As an outcast Pariah, as an unclean leper, is the black man as well at the North as at the South. Very extensively at the North is the Bible still held to be for Slavery. Bishop Hopkins of your neighboring Vermont so holds: and simply because he so holds, the Pro-Slavery party tried a few days ago to make him one of the chaplains of Congress. The wickedness of running to the blessed Bible for sanction of the highest possible crime is still very common at the North. The folly of trying to prove by a book that Slavery is right—a folly no less than would be that of trying to prove by it that two and two make five, or that a circle is a square—is still one of the follies of the North. By the way, what could any book, however sacred, be worth, which teaches *that* to be right in which there is not one element of right—nay, not one element but what is utterly and infernally wrong? And the practice still obtains at the North of according the Pro-Slavery construction to the Constitution—to a Constitution which, whilst it contains not one line nor one word for Slavery, expressly declares that: "No person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law." Yes, the people of the North do still very generally accept the Pro-Slavery interpretation of the Constitution. And they go so far as to reckon themselves very meritorious and magnanimous for it. Quite recently in the presence of a vast English audience, and by a countryman of mine whose genial spirit, unsurpassed genius and wondrous eloquence on an unlimited variety of topics are admitted and admired wherever he is known, no little credit was claimed for our Northern acquiescence in this Pro-Slavery interpretation. Alas, for the morals and religion, which adjust themselves to such an interpretation, and are made to harmonize with the diabolical wickedness it calls for! I add in this connec-

tion, that so far from there being a law for Slavery in the Constitution, there can be no law for it either in or out of the Constitution. Law is for the protection of rights. But Slavery strikes down every right. All would be quick to scout the idea of a law for murder. But Slavery being worse than murder, they should be quicker to scout the possibility of a law for Slavery. I say *worse* than murder. For what enlightened parent would not rather see his child in the grave of the murdered than in bondage to the slaveholder? It is too late for a civilized nation to admit the possibility of the legalization of Slavery. It should be held that the nation, which any longer admits it, does thereby put itself outside the pale of civilization. But surely I did not need to speak to a British audience of the impossibility of legalizing Slavery. How truthfully, eloquently, and grandly your own Brougham said: "Tell me not of rights. Talk not of the property of the planter in his slaves. I deny the rights. I acknowledge not the property. The principles, the feelings of our common nature rise in rebellion against it. Be the appeal made to the understanding or to the heart, the sentence is the same that rejects it. In vain you tell me of laws that sanction such a claim. There is a law above all the enactments of human codes. It is the law written by the finger of God upon the heart of man: and by that law unchangeable and eternal while men despise fraud and loathe rapine and abhor blood they shall reject with indignation THE WILD AND GUILTY FANTASY THAT MAN CAN HOLD PROPERTY IN MAN."

I have now asked on what grounds it is that Britons sympathize with the greatest and guiltiest Rebellion the world ever knew:—a Rebellion the sole grievance for which was that there was not scope enough for Slavery. And I have now disclaimed two grounds for your sympathy with my country in her resistance to this Rebellion. The way then is open for me to state the only ground on which I claim the world's sympathy with my country in this resistance. This only ground is THE SACREDNESS OF NATIONALITY. An eminent British statesman has, within the last year, declared that "the South is fighting for independence and the North for empire." The North was offended at the declaration. But it should not have been. Your statesman is right. For one I readily accepted his statement. The South *is* fighting for independence—an independence, however, which she has no right to. The North *is* fighting for empire: and it is not only a lawful empire but one which she is under the highest obligations to fight for. In a twofold sense is it *empire* for which she fights—since she is intent both on the restoration of all the national boundaries and on the restoration of the government commensurate with all those boundaries. I repeat it, the only ground on which I claim the world's sympathy with my suffering country is the sacredness of nationality. The family relation is sacred, and must not be violated. A family may of its own accord break up and scatter. But this must not be forced upon it. Nationality is also

inviolable. Nations may agree with each other to change their boundaries. But the change must not be forced upon them. All families must leave each family to live: and all nations must leave each nation to live. The family and the nation—or, as I might say, the literal and the national family—are the two institutions of earth whose permanence all families in the one case and all nations in the other should foster and rejoice in. These institutions are too precious to be violated or neglected. Far too large a share of human happiness and human hopes is indissolubly connected with them to allow such violation or neglect. For ninety years the Poles have been without a nation. What arithmetic can compute their sufferings during these ninety years! As I was gazing, the other day, upon the picture of the beautiful and sublime face of an eminent Polish exile, I fancied that the sorrows of a whole nation were expressed in that one face of utter sadness. How murderous was the cruelty, which robbed the Poles of nationality! How far worse than every other form of ophanage was that to which it reduced them! And they still suffer as in the freshness of their suffering. Italy too still bleeds under her dismemberment. And would you, or any of you, in order to gratify a handful of slaveholders, who are compelling their poor, ignorant, and know-not-what-they-do neighbors to fight for Slavery—and would you, I say, for this miserable and guilty purpose, have the hearts of my countrymen also wrung with the agonies of a broken-up nation—of a nation, whose physical features show that her North and her South, whatever you may say of her East and West, can never be parted from each other but by a war upon nature as well as upon nationality? Oh! when will nations cease from the meanness and wickedness of wronging each other? How mean and wicked to fall upon the peace and rights of a family! Immeasurably more so to fall upon the peace and rights of a nation. Nations must cease to be jealous of each other. They must stand by each other, and never sympathize with an assault upon nationality, unless it be in that rare case where the assault is for the redress of wrongs so flagrant and unendurable, that nothing can be sacred enough to stand in the way of their redress. And then every nation should remember, that it behooves her, for her own safety, to be true to other nations. If England shall, in this hour of my country's calamity, go to the side of my country's enemies, is there not great danger that she will thereby provoke my country to go to the side of England's enemies when England shall in her turn be overtaken by the like calamity?

If I know myself, I would deeply sympathize with England, should a part of her Counties take up arms to dismember her. I would call it right in that case to fight for "empire": and indeed I know no nation that would in such case fight more earnestly for it. Wouldn't you call it right? Nay, wouldn't even the eminent statesman, who *reproached* my country with fighting for "empire," call it right for England, if in the circumstances of my country, to fight for "empire"? But if England would be en-

titled to sympathy in her endeavors to reduce to loyalty her revolting Counties, why is not my country entitled to it in her struggle with revolting States? It is true that the States, which make up my nation, are more important political divisions than the Counties of England—for they are larger, have more administrative power, and have legislative power also. Nevertheless an American State no more than an English County is a nation; and has no more right than an English County to set up for itself.

Britain, France, America, and all the nations of the earth should be faithful to each other, and should spare their sympathies for objects worthier than piracies and slaveholding ambition and slaveholding greed. The Rebellion in my country is nothing more nor less than Slavery in arms. The monster had for many years tried to accomplish his infernal objects through the ballot-box and through all sorts of intrigue and corruption. Failing of entire success by these means, he took up arms. But, thank God, the Rebellion is fast going down. Slavery, being identical with it, of course goes down with it. The ending of the Rebellion will necessarily be the ending of Slavery. Not one shred of Slavery will survive the utter extinction of the Rebellion. And let none fear that it will be anywhere reëstablished. The people, who have once thrown off Slavery, will never recall it. They will have no desire to exchange the blessings of Liberty for the curse of Slavery. Your West-India planters continued, after the Decree of Emancipation, to ask for more money and more favors: but, none of them wanted the restoration of Slavery. They had all had enough of that.

Yes, its self-inflicted wound is mortal, and American Slavery must soon die. When it is dead, then, as I trust, will my countrymen, North and South, East and West, having through this war worked out in tears and blood the heavy and Heaven-appointed penalty of their crimes against the black man, penitently and unitedly engage in redressing his matchless wrongs, healing the deep gashes in his spirit, and opening the way wide and generous for his bodily, mental and moral improvement. If this shall come to pass, then will a nation grow up in my land grander and more beautiful than any other nation. This will not be because we are better than other people—for we are not. It will be because nature has dealt more bountifully with us than with any other land. And then will my nation, because it shall have become just to its own people of all classes, conditions, and complexions, be relied on, the earth over, to be just to all nations. For, with the change of but one word, we can say to a nation with all the confidence and emphasis with which your greatest of all poets said to an individual:

“To thine own self be true:
And it must follow, as the day the night,
Thou canst not then be false to any nation.”

ON THE COUNTRY.

LETTER TO HON. D. C. LITTLEJOHN.

PETERBORO, January 14th, 1864.

HON. MR. LITTLEJOHN, M. C. :

DEAR SIR: In common with your other constituents, I lament your sickness. May you soon regain your health, and the country soon regain your services! This is emphatically a time when the country needs to have every one of her true and intelligent friends at his post.

July 22d, 1861, the House of Representatives adopted with but two dissenting voices, Mr. Crittenden's Resolution, a part of which is that: "This war is waged but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution, and to preserve the Union with all the dignity, equality, and rights of the several States unimpaired; and that as soon as those objects are accomplished the war ought to cease."

This resolution is in my judgment the greatest and most pernicious of all our mistakes in carrying on the war. From the day of its passage it has never ceased to furnish the Seymours and other enemies of the Administration with their most plausible and effective arguments against the Administration, and with their mightiest influences to obstruct and pervert the war. The resolution declares war for the Constitution and Union—which it should not have done; and it fails to declare war against the rebels—which alone it should have done. No wonder that with so bad a beginning the nation has not even yet carried on an unconditional war against them!—and no wonder therefore that the war has been so protracted! Should a portion of her people revolt, England would feel that here was something to declare war *against*. She would find no time and feel no disposition to declare war *for* any thing—not even for her chosen form of government—no, nor even for her existence. She would address herself to the one work of subduing the revolt, cost however much it might to what she most cherished. She would go forward to conquer or perish. Very precious, indeed, the interests she would leave behind her. But she would no more suffer them to interfere with the absorbing object before her than would Cortes have suffered his ships to tempt his little

army with the possibilities of a safe retreat. He burnt his ships; and she would call for no stipulations in behalf of those interests. To save our Constitution and Union has been our chief object (real and pretended) in this war. Whereas our sole object in it should have been to crush the Rebellion—and this too at whatever needful expense even to the Constitution or the Union. In saying this, I surely do not expose myself to the charge of undervaluing either Constitution or Union. For who has written and spoken more than I have for the Constitution, just as it is?—and who has accepted more constantly and cordially all the terms of the Union?

A wise and firm father resolves, uncalculatingly and unconditionally, to put down his rebellious child. If reminded that his family may thereby be broken up, his reply is, that, family or no family, the young rebel shall go down. So too the brave household whom the burglar awakes, will, if told by him to see to their safety, prefer, at whatever hazard to their safety, to see to his capture. And why a nation act upon a different principle? No other nation, in the circumstances of ours, ever did. No other nation, ancient or modern, ever furnished a parallel at this point to the conduct of our own. A Rebellion, the most gigantic the world ever saw—the most guilty too, since its only real plea was that under the Constitution there were not sufficient scope and provision for the safety, extension, and perpetuity of Slavery—broke out against us. Our one and unconditional work was to put it down. No part of this work was it to save Constitution, Union, or Nation. Nay, if, in our struggle to put it down, all these shall perish, their never-to-perish monument would be worth infinitely more to the glory of God and the good of man, than could their salvation if achieved by compromise or indirection. Very sacred is nationality. But our sense of its sacredness is shown far less in trying to save a nation than in trying to punish, though at whatever hazard to the nation, the miscreants, who are at work to destroy it.

And now whence comes it that our nation has, at this point, behaved so unlike every other nation? Whence comes it that when heaven and earth bade it crush the Rebellion, and at whatever cost and without any condition or calculation—whence comes it, I ask, that it turned away from the one and only work it had to do to listen to the traitorous cry: "Save the Constitution: Save the Union!" It comes, I reply, from the simple fact that, from the first, the American people have been artfully, industriously, constantly trained to worship the Constitution and the Union. And what is it that has so successfully called for this training? It is Slavery. By day and by night Slavery has worked to make the American people worshipers of the Constitution and the Union—urging, all the time, its lying claim that the Constitution and the Union were made to uphold, extend, and perpetuate Slavery. Only a short and entirely natural step was it to their becoming worshipers of Slavery itself. And, because they took that step, the

American people have not yet been able to stand up to a square fight against the Rebellion. For the Rebellion is simply Slavery in arms; and to their deluded minds Slavery, whether armed or unarmed, being the very pet and cosset of the Constitution and Union, is as much to be cherished and protected as the Constitution and Union. The enemy paralyzed the Egyptians when he succeeded in placing between them and himself on the battle-field their sacred animals. And why our people could not strike promptly and unreservedly at the Rebellion, was simply because sacred Slavery stood between it and them. You well remember that the first concern of our early Commanders in this war was to provide for the safety of Slavery. Nothing had been seen more insane or ridiculous since the days when an Egyptian army made more account of saving the worshiped cat or crocodile than of conquering the enemy.

Let me refer to some of the evil results of this Congressional Resolution of July 22d, 1861, which, as its first and unquoted part shows, was intended to be a resolution of safety to Slavery instead of destruction to the Rebellion. It estops Congress from complaining of the over-zealous and one-idea Abolitionist, who withholds his hand from the work of putting down the Rebellion unconditionally. It licenses him to substitute for that work the upholding of the Constitution and Union. Moreover, as it virtually licenses him to take his own Abolition way for upholding them, it must not complain if that shall prove an unwise and even wild way. It also estops Congress from complaining of the Pro-Slavery Democrats for their incessant clogging of the wheels of war with their affected cautions for the safety of the Constitution and the Union. For it has itself supplanted the only true issue—the sole and stern issue of the nation with the Rebellion—by a paramount concern for the Constitution and the Union. It is in the name of this very concern that the Seymours and Woods are at work to consummate the ruin of our Republic, and to build up a slaveholding oligarchy which will be grateful to all, North as well as South, who, like themselves, love the distinctions of Aristocracy and hate the level of Democracy.

Would that Congress had not taken a ground, which allows certain men to pretend to be against the rebels, when they are not! Would that Congress had declared war against the rebels, and so compelled these certain men to stand forth openly for or against the war! Nay, would that Congress might now, even at this late day, summon the courage to make a clean, unconditional, uncompromising declaration of war—a declaration which shall be *for* nothing; and which shall be *against* the rebels, and against nothing else.

“The Reconstruction of the Government!” For one I am sorry that the public mind should be prematurely occupied with the subject. From the day when the Rebellion began, the nation should have been concerned about nothing else than to put it down; and I add, that until it is put down the nation should be concerned

about nothing else than to put it down. We are not so strong and so entirely certain of success that we can afford to be divided amongst ourselves by premature issues. Moreover, we shall not know what will be our duty to the conquered South until we shall have conquered her, and seen in what temper the conquest leaves her. As we advance into the enemy's territory, let it be subjected to a military or other temporary government; and when, if ever, the whole territory shall be ours, then let the terms of a Treaty of Peace, and not a mere Proclamation, say whether the governments and constitutions of that territory shall be as they were before, or shall be so modified as to meet any reasonable demands for their modification. That the Treaty of Peace will have no right to modify them is absurd. That the Constitution will stand in the way of it is ridiculous. When half a nation arms itself against the other half, and throws off the common Constitution, it is for that other half, if victorious, to choose whether it will or will not treat the conquered rebels according to the Constitution. It may, at its own option, treat them as rebels, or as it would foreign enemies. In such circumstances it is bound by no code nor Constitution. It is a law unto itself; and in the light of that law it is to decide what the national welfare calls for. I am free to say that I would have the Treaty revive all the conquered States, and all those rights to which they were formerly entitled under the Constitution. I say it, because I would that they might be found worthy of it. But to repose such confidence in those States, were they still impenitent and revengeful, and waiting and longing for another opportunity to strike at the heart of the nation, would be madness; and would be an immeasurable wrong as well toward the conquered as toward the conquerors. The conquered States will be entitled to nothing in virtue of their rights under their former relations. What they have done to break up these relations, (the North is entirely innocent of any thing to this end,) has worked the forfeiture of all those rights. In the name, however, of wisdom as well as humanity, let the Treaty accord to them all that it would be safe for them and for us to have accorded. Let it restore to them gladly and lovingly, all the rights of sister States, provided only that, in a sound view of the circumstances, prudence shall not forbid so entire a restoration.

I expressed my preference for a Treaty of Peace. It was proper that Washington should proclaim on what terms a local insurrection in Pennsylvania might be pacified and ended. But I would not leave it even to a Washington to decide on what terms the two halves of a mighty nation should make peace with each other.

The Proclamations! Our President is both a strong and an honest man. Moreover, his patriotic heart is firmly set on subduing the Rebellion. Nevertheless, even he, as well as other men, may fall into errors. I do not complain that his Proclamation of Freedom did not cover all the slaves. It covered as many as in his convictions the exigencies of war allowed him to declare free; and he

certainly had no moral right to extend his Proclamation beyond these convictions. In his civil capacity he could not liberate a single slave ; and in his military capacity he could liberate only so many as there was a military necessity for liberating. What I do complain of is his recognition of the right of the Supreme Court to pass upon that Proclamation. This Court has not the right to say whether it is or is not valid and operative ; and I would that Congress might protest unanimously and most solemnly against the President's recognition of it. Let this Court, if it please, take into its hands whatever Proclamations the President may make in his civil capacity. But in regard to all those which he puts forth as Head of the Army, I would say to it : "Hands off!" It is true that it is the Constitution, of which this Court is the acknowledged interpreter, which makes the President the Head of the Army. But it is also true that it is the LAW OF WAR and not the Constitution, which tells him what he may do in that capacity. What if among his military orders should be one to poison the springs and wells and food in the enemy's territory !— would our country submit to it, in case the Supreme Court should sanction it ? None the less because of that sanction would our whole country along with the whole civilized world rise up against the barbarous order. Surely, surely this Court needs no encouragement to enlarge its powers. The Dred Scott case is of itself sufficient to prove that its tendency is to set no limits to those powers.

Hundreds of thousands are petitioning Congress to abolish what remains of American Slavery. The "Confiscation and Emancipation Bill" left comparatively little of it ; and then came the President's Proclamation to make even that little less. I hope Congress will grant the petition. There are some persons who hold that Congress can, as a civil measure, enact the abolition of Slavery—and this, too, without providing any indemnity. There are also some who hold that there can be no legal Slavery under a Constitution which requires "a republican form of government" in all the States, and also requires that "no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." And there are some persons of such extreme views as to hold that Slavery, being the matchless crime against God and man, can no more than murder itself, be legalized by any Constitution, or embodied in any real law. But I could wish that Congress might avoid all these questions and abolish Slavery as a war measure, and accompany the abolition with a suitable indemnity to loyal slaveholders.

I notice that the **plans** for military canals are already coming before Congress, and that an objection to building the canal around Niagara Falls is much urged. It is a taking one, inasmuch as it appeals to local interests and individual selfishness. This objection is, that Western produce, when once afloat on Lake Ontario, will descend the St. Lawrence, and thus be lost to our cities. And is this an objection ?— Most certainly, the race of bad logicians is not yet extinct. In the first place, the Government does not propose to build these canals for commerce, but for military protection and

advantage. And in the next place, if the Niagara Canal shall give to the immense agricultural West a better market on the St. Lawrence than it can have in Boston, New-York, or Philadelphia, then ought the whole nation to rejoice in the prospect of the building of that Canal. To get better prices for its produce is of infinitely greater importance to our country than to keep undiminished a few branches of trade in a few of its cities. Because I have some land in your Oswego, I naturally desire to have a share of the vessels laden with Western produce turn into that city, and so benefit her as well as Boston and New-York. But it would be very selfish and mean in me to desire this if the produce can find a better market on the St. Lawrence. Rather should I say, let Oswego be deserted; and let Montreal outgrow New-York, if she can do so by attracting the produce and increasing the wealth of our farmers. But I apprehend that the great West will be sadly disappointed, if she expects by means of the Niagara Canal to have a better market on the St. Lawrence, which for half the year is closed with ice, than she can have elsewhere. If this is her expectation from that Canal, then so far she is unwise in calling for the building of it. The Canal will be an important military work; but it will bring comparatively little to the markets of Canada.

And I also notice, that there is a movement in Congress to terminate the Reciprocity Treaty—that Treaty which, you remember, I worked so hard for when I was a Member of Congress. I hope that my country will not be guilty of the illiberality and unsound political economy of refusing to exchange natural productions with any country. The complaint is, that Canada sells too much to us. But if she is profited by selling to us, so are we by buying of her. If the lumberman in Maine can not get as much for his lumber under the "Reciprocity Treaty," there is nevertheless a full equivalent in the fact that the builder in Ohio buys his Canada lumber far cheaper because of that Treaty. If it is a gain to sell dear, so it is also a gain to buy cheap. We have now free access to the vast and rich forests of Canada. What a folly to cut ourselves off from this advantage for the miserable reason that Canada enjoys a corresponding advantage!—that whilst we reap the profit of buying her lumber, she reaps the profit of selling it to us! But it is held that the price of our wheat, as well as of our lumber, is reduced by this Canada competition. Can it, however, make any material difference to our farmers, whether the Canada wheat goes to Liverpool by the St. Lawrence or by New-York and Boston? Both our country and Canada grow a surplus of wheat; and hence, in the case of both, the price is regulated by the foreign market. Canada wheat will come into competition with ours, whether we do or do not continue to enjoy the advantage of transporting it across our country. Why then should we surrender this advantage? And it is also held that free Canada coal cheapens the price of ours. The more the better, declare reason and

humanity! And in response to this declaration, all the people, including especially the shivering poor, cry: "Amen!"

I close with inquiring who they are that clamor for Tariffs and the termination of the "Reciprocity Treaty"? They are few else than the comparative handful, who desire higher prices for what they have to sell. The masses, and especially the poor who make up so large a share of the masses, desire low prices. In, then, their name and behalf let us favor, not the policy which makes dear, but that which makes cheap, the necessities of life!

Your friend,

GERRIT SMITH.

LETTER TO HON. PRESTON KING.

PETERBORO, January 29th, 1864.

HON. PRESTON KING :

DEAR SIR: It was your and my privilege to meet, a day or two since, with a number of intelligent gentlemen, and to exchange views with them. It was gratifying to find them all so faithful to the Constitution, the Union, and the country, and therefore so intent on crushing the Rebellion.

I was, however, not a little surprised and sorry to find that they were, generally, very sensitive in regard to criticisms on the Government. For instance, although they were ready to say that it is our right to prosecute the war as well under the Law of War as under the Constitution, they, nevertheless, shrunk from saying that nothing in the Constitution on attainder, or on any thing else, should be plead in mitigation of the penalties incurred by the rebels. Why did they shrink from it? Simply because the President, whose few mistakes are as nothing compared with his good and grand deeds, had put in such a plea, and Congress had accepted it. But it never should have been put in nor accepted. How false, even ludicrously false, our position in consequence of this misstep of the Government! We take away his property from the armed rebel. We want to shoot him. But if we do shoot him, the property passes away from us! And thus have we tempted ourselves to spare him! The simple truth is, that we have not only all, but more than all, the rights of war against the rebels that we have against a foreign enemy. For the Constitution, which the rebels have flung away, but which we still hold over them, arms us with punishments beyond those provided for by the International Code of War.

Still more did these gentlemen shrink from saying that it is hazardous to the welfare of the masses, and fearfully violative of the great and sacred majority principle, on which rests Republican Government, to authorize a comparative handful to mould, and impose upon a State, a *permanent* form of government. The President, however, had authorized it, and hence, in the esteem of those gentlemen, the measure was put beyond criticism. I say nothing against providing, in whatever way, a *temporary* government, to meet the exigencies of war. But peace alone can afford the composure and advantages which are necessary to devise and mature a *permanent* form of government. Let me here add, that the Constitution, with its every line and letter, should be dear to us all. But the majority principle is its very soul; and hence, to violate it is to strike at the existence of the Constitution. One effect of authorizing this little minority to construct a *permanent* form

of government will be to shut out the black man from the ballot-box. But as freedom and arms are to be granted to him, there will be neither peace nor safety in the land until the right of suffrage is also granted to him.

I could not fail to see that, on the occasion referred to, I made myself quite offensive by calling in question the infallibility of the Government. My faithfulness to it was construed into unfaithfulness to it. My exception to a couple of its measures was scarcely distinguishable from the vulgar attacks upon it. But there should be great patience with the proved friend of his Government when he finds fault with it. For, at the most, it is but misjudgments of which he is guilty. Moreover, his misjudgments may, after all, turn out to be sound judgments. Multitudes, once hostile to my life-long principles, I have lived to see become identified with them. And ere they are aware, those who dissent from my present positions, may have come round to them. By the way, the popular notion that our able and upright Administration is weakened by whatever criticisms upon its measures, is far from true. To such of these criticisms as are made in the spirit of candor and patriotism it is ever ready to listen, and, therefore, is it enlightened and strengthened by whatever of wisdom there may be in them.

The President, when admitting, in regard to some of his measures, that they are not final and unalterable, virtually invites his fellow-citizens to suggest changes in them. He was wrong in referring it to the Supreme Court instead of the Law of War to decide whether Proclamations, which he had issued as Head of the Army, and therefore under the Law of War, are valid or invalid:—and let us be honest and courageous enough to say so. Again, he was wrong in holding that certain penalties, which we can inflict under the Law of War, must, of necessity, be reduced by the Constitution:—and at this point also let us deal faithfully with him.

Our Administration is indeed badly off, if, whilst on the one hand its enemies are assailing it for the purpose of destroying it, its friends, on the other, may not criticise it for the sake of helping it.

One thing more. We should adjourn to the latest possible day all causes and occasions of division amongst ourselves. Divisions in the presence of our enemy, who is mighty because he is desperate, are dangerous to the last degree. Now, the tendency of naming persons for the Presidency is to produce these divisions. Hence, there should be no nominations of President before midsummer, by which time, the Rebellion being ended, such divisions would be harmless.

Party in time of Peace is right. But in time of War it is wrong—in effect, treasonably wrong. I hoped that the Republicans had given up Party. But in the interview to which I referred at the beginning of this letter, I felt that perhaps they had not.

With great regard, your friend,

GERRIT SMITH.



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